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Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India

Volume One

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Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India

Volume One

MINISTRY OF WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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FOREWORD

Since the publication of the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Social Work* nineteen years ago, under the guidance of Shrimati Durgabai Deshmukh, herself a dedicated pioneer and a great social worker, vast changes have taken place in India's social scene. Under the impact of growth of population, industrialisation and urbanisation, and the weakening of traditional institutions and the care and protection they offered to the old and the young, the weak and the indigent, new social problems have come to the fore and many old social problems have become more intense and complex. Altogether, strains and pressures on individuals and families have tended to increase without commensurate growth in the capacity of local communities and groups to find answers to their problems.

On the other side, thanks to the development of greater social and political awareness and concern, Governments, both at the Centre and in the States, have accepted new responsibilities and have initiated new policies and measures in many new areas. They are now more committed than ever before to grappling with a wide range of social problems with their many economic, sociological, psychological and other ramifications, and to working closely with voluntary associations and community groups in alleviating suffering and improving the quality of life. Something has been achieved and there are significant indications of social progress, but much more remains to be done and, in far too many directions, the nation is still in the early phases of widespread social action.

The extensive changes which have occurred over the past two decades, both in the nature of social problems and in public policy, made it necessary for the Ministry of Welfare to arrange for an altogether new set of contributions for the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Social Work*. While this was in itself a prolonged and arduous undertaking, in turn, it has made it possible for the distinguished contributors to this edition of the *Encyclopaedia* to take a fresh and up to date view of their respective themes, to point to lessons from earlier experience, and to stress new directions and priorities in social policy. This wider and forward-looking approach has gone a long way to enhance the value of the *Encyclopaedia* as a work of reference and a tool for research and,

equally, as a record of progress achieved and of tasks still remaining to be accomplished I have every hope that the *Encyclopaedia* will be of considerable practical value not only to students of social problems and to social workers, but also to social planners and administrators and to those engaged in public affairs.

I wish to express my gratitude, first, to the authors of various contributions to the *Encyclopaedia*, for the great pains they took in preparing their articles. Much sustained service was given by the Ministry's own Project Unit headed by Dr A.B. Bose, Director (Research), and Dr. A.M. Kurup, Joint Director (Research) A large number of the contributions were carefully reviewed by individual members of the Editorial Committee In this connection, I wish specially to thank Professor K D. Gangrade, Professor V. Jagannadham, Dr. K G. Krishnamurthy, and Dr D. Paul Chowdhry who spent much time in reviewing the contributions and offered valuable suggestions Finally, most of the contributions were personally reviewed by the Chairman of the Editorial Committee, Shri Tarlok Singh, former Member of the Planning Commission

I have great pleasure in recording my own gratitude and the gratitude of my Ministry and the Government of India to the authors and to the Chairman and Members of the Editorial Committee.

DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI
MINISTER OF WELFARE

Contents

FOREWORD	v
INTRODUCTION	vii
✓ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR SOCIAL WELFARE	1
ADOPTION	6
ADULTERATION IN FOOD	14
AFTER-CARE SERVICES	22
BANKS AND SOCIAL WELFARE	30
BEGGARY	34
BONDED LABOUR	42
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT	50
✓CASEWORK	59
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HEALTH SCHEME	66
✓CHILD AND THE LAW	69
✓CHILD LABOUR	78
✓CHILD WELFARE POLICY	89
✓CHILD WELFARE SERVICES	100
✓COMMUNITY ORGANISATION	112
✓CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBER	122
COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT	132
CORRECTIONAL ADMINISTRATION	143
CRIME	155
DACOITY	166
DEVADASIS	177
✓DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES	185
✓DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES	196
✓DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION	208
✓DEVELOPMENT OF VOLUNTARY ACTION	219
DISASTERS AND DISASTER RELIEF	231
DOCUMENTATION IN SOCIAL WELFARE	245
✓DOWRY	250
DRUG ABUSE	257
ECONOMIC CRIME	266
EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT	276
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION	289

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE	302
ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION AND HYGIENE	312
EVALUATION OF SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES	321
FAMILY AND CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMME	326
FAMILY PLANNING	— 332
FIELD COUNSELLING	347
FINANCING SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES	357
FOSTER CARE	369
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	379

Contents of other Volumes

VOLUME TWO

Grants-in-Aid
Group Work
Health Education
Health Policy
History of Social Reform among Christians
History of Social Reform among Hindus
History of Social Reform among Jains
History of Social Reform among Muslims
History of Social Reform among Sikhs
History of Social Reform among Parsi Zoroastrians
Housing
Human Rights and India
Industrial Social Welfare
Integrated Child Development Services Scheme
International Labour Organisation and Labour Welfare
International Voluntary Organisations in Social Welfare
Juvenile Delinquency
Labour Welfare in the Unorganised Sector
Land Reforms in India
Legal Aid
Life Insurance
Maternal and Child Health
Mental Health in India
Minimum Needs
Modern Aids and Appliances for the Orthopaedically Handicapped
National Cadet Corps
National Service by Student Youth
National Small Savings Programmes
Nonformal Education for Adults
- Nonformal Education for Out-of-School Children and Adolescents
Nutrition Education
Nutrition Policies and Programmes

Placement of the Physically Handicapped
Population Trends
✓Poverty
Pre-School Education
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Probation and Parole
Prohibition
Prostitution and Immoral Traffic
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Rural Indebtedness
List of Contributors

VOLUME THREE

Sarvodaya Movement in India
School Feeding Programme
School Health Service
Scouting and Guiding
Social Action
Social Defence
Social Development
Social Indicators
✓Social Legislation in India
✓Social Reform
Social Policy
Social Security for Government Employees
Social Security for Workers
Social Welfare by Local Authorities (Urban and Rural)
Social Welfare Statistics in India
Social Work
Social Work in Correctional Setting
Social Work in Educational Setting
Social Work in Family Planning Setting
✓Social Work in Medical Setting
Social Work in Housing and Urban Development Setting
Social Work as a Profession ✓
Social Work in Psychiatric Setting
Social Work in Rural Setting
Suicide —

INTRODUCTION

The first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India* was a pioneer undertaking which broke much new ground. In presenting it to the country in 1968, as Chairman of the Editorial Committee, Shrimati Durgabai Deshmukh had expressed the hope that the publication would be revised periodically, perhaps every five years.

The task of preparing a new edition of the *Encyclopaedia* was taken up by the Ministry of Social Welfare in 1976. An outline plan of revision was drawn up and an Editorial Committee constituted. What was envisaged was a new set of contributions and not merely updating and revision of earlier contributions. The social welfare scene had been changing in many directions and there was need for a broader perspective. Therefore, in keeping with the developments of the sixties and the seventies, the new *Encyclopaedia* sought to cover a wide-ranging set of themes. These included the setting for social welfare, social policy and development, social services, labour welfare, welfare of special groups, youth welfare, social work education and training, social work methods and administration, voluntary efforts, plans and policies, research and evaluation, and several other aspects of social work and welfare.

In the period between the two publications, problems of social welfare and development have become an integral concern of the process of planning and development at the national, state and local levels. Many new institutions and agencies have come into existence. In many parts of the country, there have been numerous innovative social efforts through the initiatives of voluntary organisations and voluntary leaders as well as of public agencies. In every field, earlier assumptions have been questioned and gaps in policy and implementation have come to be identified more precisely. Social challenges loom larger than before. They are more than social in their nature, for economic, political and other elements are inextricably bound up with them. The texture becomes increasingly complex and every aspect of social welfare takes on a multi-disciplinary dimension.

The present edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India* is, thus, a new work. Even themes dealt with in the earlier volumes have a markedly

changed character and have been treated afresh. In the intervening period, many new social problems and social concerns have come to the fore. In this sense, a work like the present *Encyclopaedia* marks a stage in the growth of understanding of basic social problems. It may be seen as an effort to assess and analyse so as to pave the way for a renewed endeavour to find adequate answers to outstanding social issues. Since no problem stands alone, it is hoped that the *Encyclopaedia* will also help students of society and social workers to see interrelationships between different facets of the social reality and appreciate how a variety of constructive advances are needed in several directions at the same time.

The present *Encyclopaedia* comprises 138 specially prepared contributions arranged alphabetically in three volumes. The fourth volume is devoted to the description of organisations and agencies which are engaged in or are serving the cause of social work and welfare. They include Government organisations, institutions and agencies, organisations of the United Nations, leading national voluntary agencies, and international voluntary organisations working in India. The selection of organisations to be dealt with in the fourth volume of the *Encyclopaedia* was made after extensive consultations. In several cases, the articles were prepared by the staff of the Project Unit of the *Encyclopaedia* on the basis of material obtained from the concerned organisations and then referred back to them for updating and verification.

In view of the publication *Handbook on Social Welfare Statistics (1986)* by the Ministry of Welfare, Social Statistics as such have not been treated in the *Encyclopaedia*.

The preparation of a new *Encyclopaedia* covering a wide range of subjects is a difficult and long-drawn effort which can only be carried through with cooperation and help from a large number of individuals, institutions and organisations. It is specially a pleasure to record with deep gratitude the willing and generous support received from the authors of the various contributions as well as from a large number of official and non-official organisations.

Work on the *Encyclopaedia* has been undertaken with guidance from an Editorial Committee which was set up at the inception of the Project, but whose composition changed in some part for unavoidable reasons. Throughout its tenure, the Committee had the benefit of the advice of several distinguished scholars. They included Professor M S Gore, who had served as Honorary Director of the 1968 *Encyclopaedia*, Professor V Jagannadham and Professor K D Gangrade. The Planning Commission was represented

throughout by Dr K G Krishnamurthy. On behalf of the Central Social Welfare Board, successive Chairmen (Shrimati Sarojini Varadappan, Shrimati Leela Moolgaokar and Shrimati Sushila Rohtagi) served on the Editorial Committee. The National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development was represented by its Director, first by Shri B Chatterjee and subsequently by Dr.D Paul Chowdhry. The office of Chairman of the Editorial Committee was filled initially by three Secretaries of the Ministry of Social Welfare (Shri P N Luthra, Shri S Y Ranade and Shri Saran Singh). From July 1978 to March 1981, the late Shri J P Naik served as Chairman. When Shri Naik's health declined, I was asked to take up the responsibility. The Editorial Committee had throughout the advantage of the services of Dr. A B Bose, Director(Research) in the Ministry of Social Welfare as its Member-Secretary.

All the contributions to the *Encyclopaedia* have been read by one or the other member of the Editorial Committee. As Chairman, I have had the opportunity and the benefit also of reading almost all of them. The Editorial Committee wishes to express its deep appreciation of the care and thoroughness which the distinguished authors, all acknowledged scholars in their own fields, have brought to bear on their contributions to the *Encyclopaedia*.

In an undertaking such as this, it is but natural that the burden of detailed preparation, planning and study of drafts should fall on the staff constituting the Project Unit in the Ministry of Welfare. The Unit was headed by Dr A.B. Bose, Director (Research), who was ably assisted by Dr A M Kurup, Joint Director (Research) and other members of the Unit. Special mention should be made of the contribution of members of the Planning, Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Division of the Ministry who were associated with the preparation of the *Encyclopaedia* in different capacities at various stages. Shri P N Jha, Dr P S K Menon and Dr Biswajit Sen (Senior Research Officers); Shri R M Chopra, Shri D R Kapool, Shri N K Rai, Km Indram Sarkar and Smt T K Sarojini (Research Officers), Shri B K Chopra, Shri N.K Kukreja, Smt. R.S Trivedi and Shri Ashok Virmani (Senior Research Investigators). Shri Mata Prasad undertook the arduous labour of typing articles prepared for the *Encyclopaedia* from the very beginning until the completion of the Project. At all stages, Dr. Bose provided valuable and well-informed leadership to the members of his team, and the Editorial Committee feels greatly indebted to him.

(x)

Finally, the Committee wishes to express its gratitude to the Publications Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for accepting the onerous responsibility of publishing the present edition of the *Encyclopaedia* in the same helpful spirit in which they had published the first edition nineteen years ago

TARLOK SINGH
CHAIRMAN, EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR SOCIAL WELFARE

Three important dates occur in the evolution of the Ministry of Social Welfare at the Centre. These are 14 June 1964 when the Department of Social Security was created, 24 January 1966 when the Department of Social Security was redesignated as Department of Social Welfare, and 24 August 1979 when the Department of Social Welfare was elevated to the status of an independent Ministry.

The need to have a separate Department or Ministry at the Centre had been recommended by various committees, study teams and conferences. A memorandum was submitted on 12 May 1956 by the Indian Conference of Social Work (now Indian Council of Social Welfare) to the then Prime Minister, urging the creation of a Central Ministry of Social Welfare. The memorandum, listing the reasons for creation of a separate Ministry of Social Welfare, stated that "the need for the creation of such a Ministry has been strongly urged by the Planning Commission itself in Chapter 36 of the First Five Year Plan document. The social welfare needs of the people must be tackled in an integrated manner with a progressive social outlook and philosophy as also with the optimum use of the country's limited resources in trained men and scientific equipment".¹ The Conference felt that the early establishment of a Social Welfare Ministry at the Centre was very necessary not only to integrate the administration of social welfare in the country, but also to provide the policy of social development with a driving force which can only be given through a well-formulated philosophy of social progress.

The Study Team on Social Welfare and Welfare of Backward Classes constituted in 1958 by the Committee on Plan Projects of the Planning Commission under the chairmanship of Smt. Renuka Ray pointed out *inter-alia* that various social welfare subjects are dealt with in different Ministries. The Team was of the view that the plans and policies of social welfare

have not had the advantage of an integrated approach and direction. It, therefore, recommended the setting up of a Department of Social Welfare. The Study Team further suggested that the work relating to youth welfare, recreational services, education and welfare of the handicapped, social work research and training dealt with by the Ministry of Education, and the work relating to beggary and vagrancy, juvenile delinquency and probation, social and moral hygiene and rehabilitation of persons discharged from correctional and non-correctional institutions dealt with by the Ministry of Home Affairs, be transferred to the new Department of Social Welfare. The Study Team also suggested that administration of a national social welfare policy, initiating, reviewing and watching implementation of social welfare legislation by State Governments, coordination of social welfare schemes of the State Governments on a broadly uniform pattern, promotion of social research, and constitution and administration of a Central cadre of welfare administrators should be the other functions of the suggested Department of Social Welfare.²

It is not known whether the creation of the Department of Social Security in 1964 was a direct outcome of the recommendations of the Renuka Ray Team or of other conferences and committees. The subjects then allotted to the newly created Department of Social Security included an assortment of items like child welfare, orphans and orphanages, education of the handicapped, social welfare, the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes, ex-criminal tribes and other backward classes, unemployment insurance, social security measures, the Central Social Welfare Board, coordination and development of village industries including Khadi and handicraft, prohibition, Ambar Charkha, and UNICEF. Later on, certain subjects like social security, village industries and the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes were allocated to other Ministries.³

In 1967 in its report, the Study Team appointed by the Administrative Reforms

Commission to examine the machinery of the Government of India and its procedures of work suggested that rehabilitation and social welfare should be combined into a single department and the department should then be grouped with the Department of Labour and Employment to constitute a Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Welfare. It further recommended that considering the tremendous influence that charitable and religious institutions can have on social welfare programmes of the Government and in moulding public opinion in the field, this subject should be transferred from the Ministry of Law to the proposed Department. The Study Team was of the view that child welfare should not be separated from health and family planning and should be transferred from the Department of Social Welfare to the proposed Ministry of Health, Family Planning and Regional Planning⁴

ALLOCATION OF SUBJECTS

The subjects allocated to the Department of Social Welfare need also to be viewed in the context of the consecutive Five Year Plan policies and programmes. Although a separate social welfare sector has been in existence ever since the beginning of the First Five Year Plan (1951-56), a separate Department of Social Welfare came into being only after about thirteen years.

The Department of Social Welfare was elevated to the status of an independent Ministry on 24 August 1979 and was placed under the charge of a Cabinet Minister. This opportunity was not, however, availed of to regroup or reallocate subjects related to social welfare from amongst different Ministries. The subjects allocated to the Ministry of Social Welfare cover child welfare and development, women's welfare and development, welfare of the physically handicapped, social defence, social welfare planning and research, etc. The Ministry provides general direction in social welfare policy formulation, promoting legislation and amendments to legislation,

review of welfare legislation, implementation of schemes, promotion and assistance to voluntary effort and coordination⁵

The list of subjects which stand allocated to the Ministry of Social Welfare would show that several subjects or significant parts of these subjects administered by other Ministries could perhaps be administered by the Ministry of Social Welfare, as, for instance, social education and adult education and youth welfare activities (Ministry of Education and Culture), welfare of labour (Ministry of Labour), legal aid to the poor (Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs), and relief and rehabilitation of displaced persons (Department of Rehabilitation, Ministry of Supply and Rehabilitation).

The allocation of subjects to the Ministry of Social Welfare has thus not strictly followed any set pattern or direction. It has over the years primarily been based on the views of policy-makers and administrators as to which Ministry would be in a better position to discharge a particular function.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANISATION

Officers of the rank of Secretary, Additional Secretary and Joint Secretary have headed the Ministry since its inception in 1964. It is only from February 1974 that the Ministry has continuously been headed by an officer of Secretary's rank. Only once earlier, for about 3 years (July 1964 to April 1967), it was headed by a Secretary. But in between April 1967 and February 1974, the Department was headed by a Joint Secretary for about two years (from April 1967 to February 1969) and by an Additional Secretary for about five years (from February 1969 to February 1974). The Ministry has had thus a chequered career, its status varying from time to time.

The administrative strength of the Ministry was rather small during 1966 to 1970. The then Department had the usual secretariat structure comprising one head of department (Secretary

or Additional Secretary or Joint Secretary, as the case was), one Deputy Secretary, two Under Secretaries, four technical officers and other subordinate staff on approved pattern. Over the years, the strength of the Ministry has increased, particularly those of technical officers. As on 31 March 1981, the Ministry's strength consisted of one Secretary, three Joint Secretaries, six Directors/Deputy Secretaries and other supporting technical and administrative staff⁶

The Ministry has now three Bureaux (i) Social Security and Social Defence, (ii) Nutrition and Child Development, and (iii) Women Welfare and Development. The Planning, Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Division is attached to one of the Bureaux but services all the Bureaux.

SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES

Recognising the fact that social welfare activities are only additive and therefore supplementary to other social services for development of human resources, such as health, education, nutrition, housing, etc., the size of outlays on social welfare alone has been small though gradually increasing from Plan to Plan. As a percentage of total Plan outlay, the outlay on social welfare has been extremely small. In the First Five Year Plan it was 0.2 per cent, in the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), the percentage remained almost the same though in absolute terms the outlay increased from Rs 4 crores in the First Plan to Rs 272 crores in the Sixth Plan.

The Ministry of Social Welfare operates some Central and Centrally sponsored programmes. Some social welfare programmes are in the State sector (Plan and non-Plan). In the Sixth Plan (1980-85), for instance, the outlay for Central and Centrally sponsored schemes was Rs 150 crores, while it was Rs 122 crores for State/Union Territories.

The Central schemes in the Sixth Plan are (1) functional literacy for women, (2) condensed courses of education for adult women, (3) socio-economic programme, (4)

hostels for working women; (5) National Institutes for the Blind, the Deaf, the Mentally Retarded and the Orthopaedically Handicapped; (6) scholarships, research, training, sheltered employment, grants-in-aid to voluntary organisations for the handicapped, etc., (7) Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation, (8) National Institute of Social Defence, (9) National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, (10) social work education and training, (11) planning, research, evaluation, monitoring and innovative action-cum-research projects, (12) grants-in-aid to voluntary organisations by the Central Social Welfare Board and strengthening of its field units, (13) grants-in-aid to all-India voluntary organisations, (14) creches/day-care centres for children of working mothers, (15) education work for prohibition.

The Centrally sponsored schemes in the Sixth Plan are (1) services for children in need of care and protection, (2) Integrated Child Development Services, (3) welfare of destitute women and children, (4) integrated education of the physically handicapped, (5) placement of handicapped through special employment exchanges and appointment of special officers in ordinary employment exchanges.

The Ministry of Social Welfare provides policy guidelines and directions to the States in consonance with the national objectives of social welfare such as reducing poverty and inequality and increasing self-reliance. The Ministry associates actively with the State five year and annual plan discussions in the Planning Commission. This provides an opportunity to review programmes implemented in the States. Generally, an annual Conference of State Social Welfare Ministers preceded by a Conference of State Secretaries in-charge of Social Welfare is held. This also helps in reviewing social welfare programmes in the country.

As generally is the case in other Ministries, the Ministry of Social Welfare have also constituted from time to time Committees,

Working Groups, Study Teams and similar other bodies to review current situations and trends, assess current policies and programmes and to make recommendations. The terms of reference, composition of the Committees, and their tenure vary. Non-officials are associated with such bodies. Then, there are some Standing Committees. The more important of these are the National Children's Board, National Committee on Women, Inter-Departmental Coordination Committee on Women, Central Prohibition Committee, Advisory Committee on Social Welfare Research, Central Coordination Committee on Nutrition Programme and Coordination Committee for UNICEF-assisted Programmes. Some of the bodies constituted by the Ministry of Social Welfare in the recent past were the Working Group on Social Welfare in the Five Year Plan 1980-85, the Committee on the Status of Women in India, and the Working Group on Employment of Child Labour. These Committees were set up for specified periods and ceased to function after submitting their reports.

The constitution of such bodies has generally helped the Ministry in obtaining a cross-section of opinion on various subjects. They have also been able to analyse the Ministry's policies and programmes and suggest possible improvements in them.

SUBORDINATE ORGANISATIONS

The Ministry of Social Welfare is assisted in its functions by a number of subordinate organisations. These are the Central Social Welfare Board, the National Institute of Social Defence and the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development.

The Central Social Welfare Board was set up in August 1953 *inter alia* to undertake a survey of the needs and requirements of the voluntary organisations and to assist them in their welfare activities, in addition to taking up welfare programmes of its own. Some of the important programmes taken up by the Central Social Welfare Board include welfare extension

projects, condensed courses of education for adult women, socio-economic programmes for women in need of work and wages, and creches.

The Central Institute of Research and Training in Public Cooperation established in February 1966 was reorganised in July 1978 as the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development. The functions of the Institute include research, training, documentation and advisory services in voluntary action and child development. The professional work of the Institute is divided into three broad divisions, namely, public cooperation, child development and common services.

The Central Bureau of Correctional Services was reconstituted and renamed as the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD). The functions of the Institution include (a) to review policies and programmes in the field of social defence, (b) to anticipate and recognise social defence problems; (c) to develop preventive, rehabilitative and curative measures in the field of social defence, and (d) to develop and promote voluntary effort in social defence.

RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND MONITORING

In a fast changing society, social problems arise at frequencies and magnitude that cannot be easily anticipated or visualised. Therefore, research on various aspects of social life is a necessary ingredient of social planning and action. Realising this, the Ministry of Social Welfare gives adequate importance to research and evaluation. Perhaps, it is one of the few Ministries/Departments in the Government of India which have a substantial technically competent staff employed in assisting the administration in planning and implementation of programmes. The Ministry has a scheme of sponsoring studies on subjects relevant to social welfare programmes and policies. This scheme began in 1973-74 and by 1982-83 about 200 research studies had been sanctioned. The Ministry also brings out summaries of these

research studies A Handbook on Social Welfare Statistics was started in 1974 It is updated regularly Some of the other important assignments taken up include statistical compilation on women and on children, handbooks on social work education and training facilities in India, Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India, and documentation on the problem of aging.

National Institutes have also been set up for the various categories of physically and mentally handicapped such as the National Institute for the Visually Handicapped at Dehradun, and the National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped at Calcutta Proposed to be set up are National Institutes for the Hearing Handicapped and the Mentally Retarded Some specialised institutions (Training Centre for the Adult Deaf, and School for the Partially Deaf Children at Hyderabad, and Institute for the Physically Handicapped at New Delhi) also function under the Ministry Since 1979, the administrative control of the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India set up at Kanpur to provide artificial limbs and accessories to the needy persons at reasonable cost has been transferred to the Ministry of Social Welfare

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE IN STATES

While at the Centre a well-integrated administrative set up has now come up and all the schemes in the social welfare sector are located in the Ministry of Social Welfare, such is not the case in the States Though in some States there is now either a full-time Secretary for social welfare or this is one of the main portfolios of a Secretary, social welfare schemes are still spread over more than one department/directorate The pattern in regard to implementation of some of the welfare schemes, like old age pension scheme and supplementary nutrition programme also varies from State to State While most States now have district social welfare officers, there is no social welfare functionary at the block level

The manpower, too, is in most cases untrained

CONCLUSION

The social welfare tasks that lie ahead are many, and of varied kinds and dimensions In the evolution of social welfare, a stage has now been reached where the concept of social welfare itself seems to be giving place to that of social development The custodial and curative methods and techniques are fast giving way to preventive, rehabilitative and development measures

Many related subjects are currently not allocated to the Ministry of Social Welfare It would facilitate effective planning, formulation and implementation of programmes and schemes, if all related social welfare subjects are brought under the charge of one Ministry, the Ministry of Social Welfare⁸

P SANKARAN KUTTY MENON

NOTES

- 1 Indian Conference of Social Work, Bombay, Memorandum to the Prime Minister, Government of India, dated 12 May 1956
- 2 Government of India, *Report of the Study Team on Social Welfare and Welfare of Backward Classes*, Vol I, Planning Commission, 1950
- 3 A B Bose, "The Administrative Structure for Social Welfare at the Centre", *Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol XXXV No 4 (January 1975), pp 397-411
- 4 Government of India, *Report of the Study Team on the Machinery of the Government of India and its Procedures of Work*, Administrative Reforms Commission, 1967
- 5 The subjects allocated to the Ministry of Social Welfare as per Allocation of Business Rules, 1961 are (1) Social security and social insurance save to the extent allotted to any other Department, (2) Relief of the disabled and unemployable and measures relating to social security and social insurance, save to the extent allotted to any other Department, (3) Social welfare, social welfare planning, project formulation, research, evaluation, statistics and

training, (4) family welfare, (5) woman and child welfare and coordination of activities of other Ministries and organisations in connection with this subject, (6) reference from the United Nations Organisation relating to traffic in women and children, (7) conventions with other countries in matters relating to social defence, (8) care of pre-school children, (9) coordination of national nutrition programme, nutrition feeding of pre-school children and nutrition education of women, (10) institutional and non-institutional services for the care and development of children in need, including orphans and orphanages, (11) United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), (12) education, training, rehabilitation and welfare of the physically and mentally handicapped, (13) National Institutes for the Physically Handicapped and the Mentally Retarded, (14) National Centre for the Blind, including the Central Braille Press, Dehradun, Training Centre for the Adult Deaf, and School for the Partially Deaf Children, Hyderabad, Model School for Mentally Retarded Children, New Delhi and other national institutes, (15) Central Social Welfare Board, (16) Social and moral hygiene programmes, (17) beggary, juvenile vagrancy, delinquency and other care programmes; (18) probation of juvenile offenders, (19) research, evaluation, training, exchange of information and technical guidance on all social defence matters, including correctional services, (20) all matters relating to prohibition, (21) educational and social welfare aspects of drug addiction, (22) charitable and religious endowments pertaining to subjects allocated to this Ministry, (23) promotion and development of voluntary effort on subjects allocated to this Ministry, (24) National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, (25) National Institute of Social Defence, (26) coordination of activities of CARE, (27) all other attached or subordinate offices or other organisations concerned with any of the subjects specified in this list, (28) administration of the following Acts (a) Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956, (b) Probation of Offenders Act, 1958, and (c) Children Act, 1960, and (29) Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), Kanpur

6 Government of India, *Report 1980-81*, Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi

7 *Ibid*

8 The Ministry of Social Welfare was renamed as Ministry of Social and Women's Welfare on 31 December 1984. Since 25 September 1985, it has been reorganised as Ministry of Welfare and the Department of Women and Child Development. The Ministry of Welfare has been formed by pooling subjects relating to welfare of the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities and other backward

classes from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the welfare of the disabled and programmes of social defence from the erstwhile Ministry of Social and Women's Welfare. Work relating to *Wakf* matters has been transferred to the Ministry of Welfare with effect from 23 January 1986. The Department of Women and Child Development has been placed under the new Ministry of Human Resource Development, with effect from 26 September 1985.

ADOPTION

Adoption is the establishment of the relation of parent and child between individuals who have been denied it by nature. It involves becoming a parent through a legal and social process rather than through the biological process. Adoption provides permanent substitute family care for the child when his natural parents are not in a position to take care of him or are unwilling to do so and have therefore been legally freed of any ties to the child. In a more formal definition, adoption entails "the extinction of all present or future rights and obligations of the natural parents of the child and the transfer, by administrative and legal authority, of all these rights and obligations to a married couple who have no blood relationship with the child"¹ Adoption is a legal process by which a child of one set of parents becomes the child of another set of parents, and it confers upon the child and the adoptive parents substantially the same mutual rights and responsibilities as those which exist in the natural parent-child relationship.² Adoption thus is the most complete means whereby family life can be restored to a child deprived of his natural family.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Roman Law recognised the legal adoption of a child of one individual by another, and now many countries of Europe have legalized adoption.

In U K , the Adoption of Children Act was first enacted in 1926 This was later replaced by Adoption Acts of 1958 and 1960 In U.S A , Massachusetts was the first state to have a statute on adoption as far back as in 1851 and now every state in the U S A. has such a provision This is done generally through judicial proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction.³

In India the practice of adoption is not a new phenomenon India is a land of many communities professing different religions All religions are governed by separate sets of rules with respect to their personal law, and adoption is a matter of the personal law which varies from religion to religion None of these religions, except the Hindu religion, recognises adoption

The idea of adoption has been accepted in Hindu culture for generations Ancient Indian writings provided numerous instances where a family without children, particularly a male child, adopted a son of a near relative In the prevailing norms of the time three types of male children were recognised, namely, *auras* or legitimate son, *dattaka* or adopted son, and *dasiputra* or the illegitimate son normally borne by a concubine⁴

The son had a special place in the Hindu family He had to perform the last rites for the salvation of his parents This custom motivated families to adopt a son So, for the Hindus, adoption had a religious significance The other considerations for adoption were, perpetuation of the family name, old age security, and inheritance of property

The *Smritis* contain rules and conditions for valid adoption, but they were not universally applicable for all regions of the country For instance, a bachelor or a widower could adopt a child, but a married woman could not In some places, as in Madras, a *Devdasi* could adopt a girl In Bombay a widow could adopt provided prior permission of the husband had been sought before his death, or it had been provided for in his will In southern India also, a widow could adopt under certain other

conditions With Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, adoptions were solemnized by a *datta homam* ceremony The Sudras could not perform any ceremony A significant fact to be noted, however, is that in all cases of adoption a symbolic ritual act of actual handing over of the child by one family to the other was performed by mutual consent

Besides the lack of uniformity with respect of adoption in different schools of Hindu law, there were several anomalies under the traditional Hindu law For instance, a widow or a spinster could not adopt a child It was not permissible to adopt a daughter, an orphan, or an only son It was, therefore, decided to codify Hindu law and thus the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, was enacted

HINDU ADOPTION AND MAINTENANCE ACT 1956

This piece of legislation has codified the adoption law for the Hindus Some of the salient features of this statute are as follows

It brought about some uniformity in the adoption law throughout India irrespective of the school of Hindu law operating in a particular region or locality The Act applies to any person who is a Hindu by religion in any of its forms or developments, and to Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs It also brought under its purview the scheduled tribes and aborigines Section 11 of the Act also makes it clear that the performance of *datta homam* shall not be essential to the validity of an adoption

According to the Act, a person having no Hindu son, son's son, or son's son's son living at the time of adoption can adopt a son Similarly, a person can adopt a daughter provided that at the time of adoption no Hindu daughter or son's daughter is living

Formerly, in ancient Hindu law only a father or mother could give his/her 'own' child in adoption This position remained unchanged in the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 Consequently, an orphan or deserted child could not be given in adoption under this Act However, this position has since changed

with the amendment made in 1962 to the 1956 Act, under which an orphan, deserted, or illegitimate child can be given in adoption by the legally accepted guardian of the child, who may be either an individual or an institution. According to the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act 1956 only a Hindu child could be taken in adoption. It is, however, very difficult to determine the religion of an orphan or a deserted child. The 1962 amendment removed this difficulty also. It laid down that a child brought up as a Hindu should be regarded as a Hindu.

According to this Act, a child could be adopted upto 15 years of age. Under the old Hindu law a younger person could adopt an older child, but now under the Act, the difference between the ages of adoptive parents and the adopted child should be at least 21 years and the former should be older than the latter. Now a widow or a spinster can adopt a child, and either a man or a woman can adopt a son or a daughter.

While adoption is permitted amongst the Hindus by statute and by custom, Muslims, Christians and Parsis have no adoption laws and have to approach the court under the Guardians and Wards Act, 1891. Muslims, Christians and Parsis can take a child according to this Act only under foster care. Once a child under foster care becomes a major, he is free to break away all his connections. Moreover, such a child does not have the legal right of inheritance.⁵

NEED AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ADOPTION

A basic assumption important in adoption is that every child has a right to parental love, protection, and a family. Several studies dealing with children have established the connection between early family experience and its significance in the social and emotional development of the child.

There are a number of children who are not fortunate to be blessed with the advantages of life in a family. Children are orphaned or abandoned as a result of death, desertion,

divorce, or separation of parents. There is also increasing incidence of children born out of wedlock. All these require substitute care and some form of rehabilitation.

Institutionalisation is, however, not the only or the best answer to the problem of care of children deprived of their own homes. Institutions are generally overcrowded and understaffed and lack the personal touch so essential to healthy physical and emotional growth of a child. In an institution children are generally emotionally starved and miss the love and security of a home that parents and siblings can provide. Their personal wants and needs tend to be submerged in group wants and care, thereby preventing them from establishing their own identity.

Even if we improve the standard of our institutions and introduce better measures of rehabilitation, institutionalisation would still be a poor substitute for family life so vital for the healthy development of a child. Providing children deprived of natural families with families in which they can grow and develop like normal children is certainly the better and more effective way.

Adoption, which involves and evokes the best of human emotions, fulfils the mutual need of both the childless couples and of the children without parents. Out of all the alternatives open for rehabilitation of orphaned and abandoned children, adoption offers the soundest solution, for it ensures that the child is wanted, protected and loved. It provides a sound foundation for developing a sense of trust, identity and belonging in the child, so necessary for his adequate development. For the childless couple, it provides an opportunity for the emotional fulfilment of parenthood. Adoption has a decided advantage over other forms of rehabilitation of the deprived child because it is permanent in nature. It gives a sense of security to both the child and the adoptive parents with the sure knowledge that each belongs to the other. It lays the foundation of a deep, satisfying family life.

SOCIAL WORK METHODS AND SKILLS

Placing a child in adoption involves a great deal of responsibility and understanding of human behaviour and development on the part of the social worker of the adoption agency. Therefore, agencies or institutions desirous of developing such a programme must provide services of workers with the right kind of training and experience. They have a dual responsibility. The first is to provide for the children families which would give effective care, love, security, and opportunities for the total growth of the children who cannot be raised by parents to whom they are born, and the second is to help childless couples adopt suitable children to complete their family. Of the greatest importance is the evaluation and selection of adoptive parents. The areas to be investigated cover both tangible aspects such as financial stability, physical health, accommodation, neighbourhood, etc., and the less tangible aspects such as the emotional health of the couple, their capacity for parenthood, the quality of their marital relationship, their motivation and attitude towards adoption, etc. This information is sought through a variety of sources. However, the primary sources are the adoptive applicants themselves and the information is obtained primarily through individual and joint interviews with the couple. The aspects necessary to be considered are

(i) Financial stability It is not necessary for adoptive couples to be rich but their income should be sufficient to meet the family needs of food, clothing, and education. More important is the stability and security of the income, even if it is limited. Housing and neighbourhood are equally important.

(ii) Age and physical health It is also important that the adoptive couple are in good health and are free from communicable diseases. A general examination of the child is also necessary. As far as possible, the adoptive couple should not be above 45 years of age—unless of course they are contemplating adopting an older child. Too great an age gap

between the adoptive parents and the child is not desirable as the parents may then find it difficult to meet adequately the physical and emotional demands of the growing child.

(iii) Emotional health and capacity for parenthood This would include an assessment of their individual maturity, flexibility and adjustment to life in general and, in particular, their capacity to understand and accept the normal problems of growth in children and to provide love, security and care to the child for its healthy growth. They should be people who really like children and enjoy being with them. In assessing their capacity for parenthood, it is important to know their own experiences as children and relationship with their own parents. Such background information is necessary since this experience influences their own ideas of parental role and significantly affects the upbringing of their own children.

(iv) Quality of marital relationship Here it is necessary to assess the emotional satisfaction the applicants derive from their marriage, the acceptance of their respective roles within the family and their participation in decision making, particularly with reference to the decision to adopt.

(v) Motivation for adoption and attitude towards adoption In general, motives that focus on the needs of the adopted child rather than those that centre on the needs of the parents are more desirable and acceptable. Adopting a child with the purpose of saving a marriage or to replace a dead child or to find a playmate for their natural born child is irrational and unrealistic. It is also important to assess the attitudes of the prospective parents towards their infertility. If it is not resolved adequately and accepted, the adoption will remain a painful reminder to them of their disability. It is also necessary to assess the attitudes towards adoption of the significant 'others' in the family, because the child must be fully accepted in the family atmosphere by all the close members of the family.

Interviews held jointly and individually with the adoptive parents help the social workers to

discuss their past and current history, assess their feelings towards adoption, observe their interactions as husband and wife, their image of the child and their expectations. Home visits enable the social worker to observe the couple in an informal and familiar setting. Throughout all these contacts, the social worker is carefully assessing whether the applicants will provide an adequate and stable home for the child. It also helps the parents to discuss with the worker the full meaning of adoption and what it involves and examine and resolve many of their own doubts and fears.

Once the adoptive couple is approved by the agency and they, in turn, have approved of a suitable child, placement of the child follows. It is of paramount importance that the identity and whereabouts of the natural and adoptive parents are kept hidden from each other since this knowledge would pose a serious threat to the security of parenthood and consequently affect the child's security and stability. It is of course desirable to share pertinent social history and background of the child with the adoptive parents. These facts will help adoptive parents to understand the child and enable them to answer his questions as he grows.

It is important that the child learns of his being adopted in a natural way as he grows and begins to ask about himself. This would involve the gradual sharing with the child the knowledge that he is adopted and helping him to understand and emotionally accept this fact.

After the placement, the initial period may present some difficulties of adjustment. The social worker can give useful guidance to the new parents in parentcraft, physical and medical care, etc. Therefore, a period of supervision after placement is an essential phase of the process of adoption. The purpose of supervision is to help the child and the adoptive parents in their early adjustment to each other. The period of supervision should be at least a year and could be extended further where necessary. Ideally, there should be a period of probation of about six months or a year before the adoption is finalised.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

In our country the practice of adoption is not new. Only the concept has been undergoing changes. According to earlier practice, childless couples adopted children of relatives, particularly the male child, to perform religious rites or perpetuate the name of the family. Now the focus is changing. Social agencies today are interested in getting an orphan or an abandoned child adopted with a view to promoting family and child welfare. But it takes time for people to absorb this new thinking. In recent years more and more parents are coming forward in our country to adopt these parentless children for the simple reason that they need a child to love and care as their own. But their number is still far short of the need. Several factors are responsible for this situation. Among these are age-old prejudices particularly against illegitimacy, apprehension about heredity and blood, negative attitudes of family members and the community and lacunae in the present adoption laws of the country. Another deterring factor is that many parents are ignorant of the fact that adoption of an unrelated child is possible, that there are welfare agencies who can guide them in this matter, and that there are provisions in the existing law which safeguard the rights of parties involved in an adoption.

In recent times there has been a rapid increase in adoption of Indian babies by foreign nationals who are generally affluent and less choosy about the child they want to adopt. There is, therefore, a tendency on the part of both lawyers and child welfare agencies to exploit them. Lawyers charge the prospective parents large amounts as fees not commensurate with the legal work put in by them. Bar Associations should stipulate reasonable fees for lawyers for both internal and foreign adoptions so that malpractices because of lucrative fees can be checked. Child welfare agencies are tempted to take from prospective parents large amounts by way of donations. They are thus tempted to place

Adoption

more children with foreign nationals than with Indians. Directorates of Social Welfare in the States should therefore legislate/guard against such exploitation and check such attitudes on the part of welfare agencies.

Adoption by foreign nationals of Indian children needing adoption cannot be a long-term answer to this question. There is need to develop a positive climate for adoption through education of public opinion and wide publicity within the country as also among Indian nationals living abroad. Today much of the effort of the already limited number of social workers in this field remains confined to processing applications of foreign nationals. There is thus little time and energy left for work within the country to motivate prospective Indian adoptive parents. Besides the need for greater attention to this aspect of the problem, there is need for greater cooperation and coordination among the various children's institutions and welfare agencies doing adoption work. Very often one will find a waiting list of Indian parents in one agency and the list of children available for adoption in another. A coordinated programme among different agencies will help in furthering the cause of adoption by Indians.

NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND AGENCIES

During the past decade-and-a-half, welfare agencies in India, both at the national and local level, have increased their efforts in promoting the adoption of destitute and orphaned children. These agencies fall mainly in two categories: organisations that concentrate primarily in the field of publicity for creating public opinion and in promoting appropriate legislation on adoption; and organisations that are primary service agencies for the placement of children with families in India and abroad.

In the first category are national agencies such as the Indian Council of Child Welfare (ICCW), All India Women's Conference (AIWC), Indian Council of Social Welfare (ICSW), and Indian Association for Promotion of Adoption (IAPA). Some of

these organisations, in addition to their primary focus on spreading the message of adoption through seminars, workshops, publications, radio, and television talks, also act at times as service agencies.

In the second category are the service agencies which place children in adoption with families in India and abroad. Most of these agencies are institutions for women and children, mainly in big cities like Bombay, Madras, Delhi and Pune. There are also some hospitals which place children in adoption through their medical social workers. These are generally babies of unwed mothers. Further, there are a few family welfare agencies which have developed effective adoption services over the years.

It has been the experience of almost all these agencies that the number of children placed in adoption, both in India and abroad, has steadily increased over the years. Some of these agencies have been making a serious effort in promoting the cause of adoption by Indian parents, and it is encouraging to note that their effort is being rewarded with the increase in the number of such placements over the years. However, there are still many more children than homes that will take them.

Many agencies do not have trained personnel to do adoption work, a work which involves a thorough assessment of home conditions, proper coordination, and completion of the whole process of adoption. While there are some very good agencies operating on a professional basis, many others lack a scientific approach. It cannot be emphasised enough that the success of the service depends on professional personnel skilled in the methods of social work and having a high degree of sensitivity and maturity to understand the interplay of complicated emotions involved in the adoption of a child.

INTER-COUNTRY ADOPTION

Since the availability of children for adoption is far more than the homes that can

be found locally, foreign placement has its place. Adoption of Indian children by foreigners has increased over the years. The reason for this phenomenon is the change in attitude and values that is taking place in the Western world. As a result of the widespread use of contraceptives, easier abortion laws, decreasing social stigma attached to children born out of wedlock, very few white babies are available for adoption. Hence both parents and agencies abroad look towards countries like India where parentless children, orphaned or abandoned, are found in large numbers.

In India, adoption of destitute and orphaned children by foreigners started in a rather haphazard manner with practically no protection for the children or the parents, natural or adoptive. Some welfare institutions began placing needy children with foreigners through the cooperation of missions and agencies abroad, the primary focus being on the rehabilitation of destitute children. The practice began to spread. Realising the need for social and legal safeguards in such adoptions, international conferences held on inter-country adoptions (at Geneva in 1957, at Leysin in 1960, and at Milan in 1971) laid down principles and procedures involved in such adoptions. Collaboration between qualified legal personnel and social authorities is needed to implement these procedures for safeguarding the interests of all the parties concerned.⁶

In India, in the absence of a secular law of adoption, non-Hindus, including foreigners, have to take the child under legal guardianship under the Guardianship and Wards Act of 1890. Later they can adopt the child in accordance with the laws of their respective countries after a probation period of six months to two years. Thereafter, the child acquires the status and rights of a natural born child.

With a view to streamlining those procedures and bringing to them an element of professional assistance, the Indian Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) moved the High Court

of Bombay, requesting them to issue a notification appointing the ICSW to assist the High Court in these matters.⁶ Accordingly, in May 1979, the ICSW was appointed as consultants to the Bombay High Court for all guardianship matters. There is need for High Courts of other States in the country to take similar action.

During the period May 1972 to December 1980, the statistics of cases registered in the Bombay High Court by foreign nationals or foreign resident Indian nationals for guardianship of Indian children with a view to adoption were: number of cases processed, 4,728; number of cases granted, 4,274; number of children placed, 4,355 and number of cases not granted, withdrawn or pending, 554. The maximum number of cases were from Sweden (927), followed by France (623), Netherlands (445), Belgium (444), West Germany (331), Denmark (230), and U S A (97).⁷

There appears to be greater demand for female than for male children by foreigners, contrary to the attitude in India where there is greater preference for male children.

The demand for adoption is greater for infants under three years. However, children upto the age of twelve are being adopted, particularly by older couples. Most of these couples are married and under the age of 40 years. The average length of marriage is between 5 and 15 years.

Most of these families are of moderate means and not wealthy by Western standards but have the basic amenities and some small luxuries. The strongest motive for adoption is the need for a child. Parents unable to bear children want to complete their family through adoption. Another motive for adoption is an altruistic desire to help a needy child. In such situations very often they have either their own children or other adopted children. In a few cases, the child (mostly female) is adopted by a single woman. European countries permit single women to legally adopt a child.

At the time of passing an order on adoption, the parents are required to give an undertaking

that periodic follow-up reports on the adjustment and progress of the child will be forwarded to the High Court with copies to the Indian Council of Social Welfare till such time as the child is adopted in the country of its parents

Systematic research and follow-up in inter-country adoptions needs to be done to assess the psychological and social adjustment of these children in the countries of their adoption

Every effort should be made to rehabilitate the child within the country before inter-country adoption is resorted to. Too often, children are hastily placed for inter-country adoption without sufficient consideration being given to alternate plans which could be worked out within the country. There is great need to encourage Indian parents to come forward to adopt these orphaned and abandoned children. Adequate publicity, education, and proper legal safeguards will help considerably in promoting adoption of children in India.

THE ADOPTION OF CHILDREN BILL

Bills on Adoption of Children have been introduced by Members in Parliament (Rajya Sabha) since 1955. In 1965, the Indian Council of Social Welfare, in collaboration with other agencies, drafted an Adoption of Children Bill. Subsequent efforts to introduce the Bill were made in 1967 and 1970. Finally, the Adoption of Children Bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha in 1972. After gestating for six long years, it was withdrawn from Parliament on 19 July 1978. The Bill which had been approved by a Joint Select Committee was vehemently opposed by several members, particularly those representing the minority communities, on the grounds that it encroached upon their personal law. A new Adoption Bill 1980 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 16 December 1980. The Bill, which later lapsed, sought to provide for an enabling law of adoption applicable to all communities other than Muslims. Some of the salient features of this Bill were that it sought to provide necessary safeguards to prevent

unsuitable adoptions, permitted, subject to certain qualifications and restrictions, any person of sound mind who has completed the age of 25 years to adopt a child, made suitable provisions as to consents of the parents of the child to be adopted and of the institutions, if any, taking care of the child, provided safeguards for the protection of adopted children who are neglected or cruelly ill-treated or exploited or exposed to pernicious influences, and made detailed provisions as to licensing and supervision of institutions desiring to make arrangements for adoption of children.

USHA TRIMBAK MODAK

NOTES

- 1 Alfred Kadushin, *Child Welfare Services* (Second Edition), MacMillan Publishing Co., New York, 1967, p. 519.
- 2 Kenneth Watson, *Adoption Philosophy and Practice*, Chicago Child Care Society, 5467, S University Chicago, Illinois July 1967, p. 3.
- 3 Shanti Gupta "Adoption in India, its Background and Critical Study of Adoption of Children Bill 1972", Paper presented at National Seminar on Foster Care and Adoption Convened by Central Institute of Research and Training in Public Cooperation, New Delhi, 1973.
- 4 P V Rajamannar, "Adoption", in Government of India, Planning Commission, *Encyclopaedia of Social Work in India*, Vol 1, pp. 4-5.
- 5 The Muslim Law permits adoption to certain Muslims if their custom allows it. Under Section 3 (c) of the Shariat Act of 1937, a Muslim by making a voluntary declaration can have the right to bind himself and his children to the *Shariat* in respect of adoption. The widow of a Parsi 'dying issueless can adopt a *palak* on the fourth day of the deceased's death for the *ad hoc* purpose of performing certain religious rites annually for the deceased. This adoption is only for a limited ritualistic and religious purpose and does not confer any proprietary rights on the *palak*. See *INDIA, A Reference Annual, 1980*, Publications Division, New Delhi, 1980, p. 419, and H S Ursekar, "Legislation Supporting Adoption", *Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol 37, No 2, July 1978, p. 161.
- 6 N M Najma Goniawala "Inter-country Adoptions, Policy and Practice with reference to India", *Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol 37 No 2, July 1976,

and S D Gokhale, "Inter-country Adoptions and Consultancy in Guardianship", *Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol 37, No 2, July 1976

- 7 Position communicated by the Indian Council of Social Welfare, Bombay, to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of India, in their letter dated 5 January 1980

ADULTERATION IN FOOD

Food adulteration is not of recent origin. One can find references to this menace in the old Roman laws and other ancient books. Food laws were, therefore, necessary even a thousand years ago to control gross adulteration and cheating. They are needed even more now to deal with foods, food additives, pesticides and contaminants to which various foods may be exposed by modern processing techniques or environmental agents.

ADVANTAGES OF FOOD LAWS

Food laws, food standards and food control systems in a country are necessary to provide the following benefits:

- (1) Reduction in food losses. In India the loss of foodgrains and pulses is estimated to be 6-6 per cent. By improving methods of handling, storage, and hygienic practices, food losses will be reduced and larger quantity of foodgrains will be made available for the use of the population.

- (2) Control of gross adulteration. Adulteration of milk with water or skimmed milk and of spices with rice husk, dirt, grit and other filthy material, use of harmful colours, and contaminants of poisonous nature like argemone seeds in mustard are common. Such adulteration can only be checked if there is an effective food control system.

- (3) Control on imports. Food laws are essential for governing the imports of food articles as otherwise some exporters in other countries may find it easy to pass on adulterated and injurious foods which are not consumed in their own countries.

- (4) Control on the use of food additives. Advances in food processing technology and rapidly increasing use of chemical additives like anti-oxidants, preservatives, emulsifiers, colours and flavours have created complex problems. Their use has become necessary to maintain the physical and nutritional quality of food and to make food stuffs better protected, more nutritive or otherwise more desirable. Since many of these chemicals can be a source of chronic toxicity, mutagenicity or carcinogenicity, there is need to check the use of such chemicals.

- (5) Nutritional improvements. Food control contributes to nutritional improvement. Controlled use of food additives and hygienic processing and packaging will preserve the nutritive value of foods while improper processing, faulty handling and bad packaging or storing may result in loss of certain nutrients. In some products where nutrients are lost during processing, food laws can improve nutrition by requiring addition to foods of certain vitamins, minerals or other nutrients. Addition of specified nutrients in foods prevents certain diseases caused by their deficiency. For instance, addition of iodine to salt prevents goitre.

- (6) Export earnings. Many developing countries rely upon foreign exchange earnings from food exports. Hence, it is very important for such countries to ensure that the products exported conform to certain norms of quality and safety. Food legislation is needed for this purpose. Food legislation also encourages quality control and safety. Through better handling, hygienic production, quality control and conformity to food standards and regulations, expansion of export trade is facilitated.

Food legislation, therefore, has the following main objectives: (i) It protects the health of the consumer by providing for regulations at different stages of production, processing, storing, transport, handling and sale of food stuffs, (ii) it protects consumers against frauds and deceitful practices by prescribing packaging and labeling requirements, (iii) it protects honest manufacturers and dealers, (iv) it stimulates food industry and trade by prescribing quality control, (v) it ensures

minimum nutritional requirements and thus helps in maintaining the nutritional status of the population

DEFINITION

Food, according to the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954, has a very wide connotation. While the nutritionists will consider food to be an energy-giving item, the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act considers 'food' to be any article which is used as food or drink for human consumption, other than drugs and water, and includes (a) any article which ordinarily enters into or is used in the composition or preparation of human food, (b) any flavouring matter or condiment, and (c) any other article which the Central Government may, having regard to its use, nature, substance or quality, declare by notification in the official gazette, as food for the purposes of this Act

Thus, food colours, preservatives, pesticide residue and other additives are included in the definition of food. Water and drugs are, however, excluded from the purview of the definition

Food has further been classified into primary food and others. Primary food is an article of food that is a produce of agriculture or horticulture in its natural form

The definition of 'adulteration' further provides that, in case of primary foods, if the decline in quality falls below the prescribed standards but is solely due to natural causes and beyond the control of any human agency and is not injurious to health, then such food shall not be considered as adulterated

An article is deemed to be adulterated if (i) it is not of the nature, substance or quality demanded by the purchaser or if it is not of the nature, substance or quality which it purports to be, (ii) if the article contains any other substance or is processed in a way that its quality is affected, (iii) if the article is packed or kept under insanitary conditions, contains diseased, putrid or filthy material or contains anything which renders it injurious to health, (iv) if it contains prohibited food additives or even if the permitted additives or the

contaminants are in amounts not in conformity with the prescribed limits, (v) if the quality is beyond the prescribed standards

An article of food is deemed to be misbranded, for instance, if it is an imitation or a substitute of or resembles in a manner likely to deceive another article of food under the name of which it is sold, and is not plainly or conspicuously labelled so as to indicate its true character, if false claims are made for it upon the label or otherwise, and/or if it is falsely stated to be the product of any place or country or is sold by a name which belongs to another article of food or is so coloured, flavoured or coated that the reality is concealed

PREVENTION OF FOOD ADULTATION ACT

Prior to 1954, several States had their own food laws to regulate the production, manufacture, storage and sale of foods. The standards in regard to quality were at variance in different States which hindered the movement of food articles from one State to another. Since adulteration of foods and drugs is included in the Concurrent List of the Constitution, and in order to have uniformity in implementation, Parliament enacted the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954, which came into force from 1 June 1955.

The provisions in the original text were not so stringent. Discretion was left to the courts in awarding punishment. There were major amendments in the Act in 1964 and 1976, whereby the legislation has been made more deterrent. Certain other changes like warranty, etc., have also been included. The Act defines various terms like 'adulteration' and 'misbranding' (Section 2). It proposes the establishment of a Central Committee for Food Standards to advise the Central Government and State Governments on matters arising out of the administration of the Act (Section 3). The Act gives powers to the Central Government to establish Central Food Laboratories where samples received from the courts are analysed and certificates issued that supersede the reports of the Public Analyst (Sections 4 and 13).

Powers for checking the quality of imported foods rest with the Collector of Customs or any officer of the Government so appointed (Sections 6 and 7). The appointment of Public Analysts and Food Inspectors by the Central Government or the State Government is provided for under Sections 8 and 9 respectively. Food Inspectors have very wide powers of inspecting a place; of drawing a sample and sending it to the Public Analyst for analysis, of destroying deteriorated food articles unfit for human consumption with the prior approval of the Local (Health) Authority, of seizing suspected foods; of seizing the books of accounts with prior permission of the senior authority, etc.

A detailed procedure for drawing samples and sending them to Public Analysts has been provided for in Section 11. A purchaser can also have a food sample analysed on payment of a prescribed fee and act as a food inspector for the purpose of taking a sample and sending it to the Public Analyst (Section 12).

A detailed procedure has been laid down for submission of a report by the Public Analyst, action to be taken by the Local Health Authority on receipt of the report, and the procedure of sending a second sample to the Central Food Laboratory (Section 13).

Section 14 of the Act prescribes that the manufacturer, distributor or dealer in an article of food has to give a warranty about the nature and quality of the article to his vendor. A bill, cash memo or invoice is also taken as warranty. This provision stands as a safeguard to the vendor under Section 19 of the Act. If, on analysis, the article is found adulterated. While drawing the samples the vendor has to disclose to the Food Inspector the name and address of the person from whom he purchased the article. Section 16 provides penalties for various types of offences under the Act. Depending on the gravity of the offence, the penalty varies from a minimum of three months' imprisonment and a fine of not less than Rs. 500 to imprisonment for life and a fine of not less than Rs. 5,000. Lifetime imprisonment is applicable in those cases where

the adulteration is of a nature which is likely to cause death or such harm as would amount to grievous hurt within the meaning of Section 320 of I.P.C.

The Act also provides for summary trial and a sentence of imprisonment upto one year (Section 16 A).

Offences relating to companies are governed by Section 17 where it is provided that a company may nominate any of its directors or managers (in a managerial or supervisory capacity) to be responsible for all violations. The nominee has to give his consent in writing. Such nominations however do not absolve the directors or managers or any other person if it is found that the offence has been committed with the consent and connivance of or any neglect on the part of such director, manager or any other officer of the company. Section 18 provides powers to the court for forfeiture of property. Section 19 gives protection to the vendor if an article sold by him is found adulterated but was purchased with a written warranty and was properly kept and sold in the same condition as he purchased it. Section 20 lays down that prosecutions can be launched with the written consent of an officer of the Central Government or State Government. The officer giving such consent has to apply his mind before giving such consent to avoid frivolous complaints. Section 21 gives enhanced powers to Magistrates for giving sentences exceeding their general powers. Section 22 gives powers to the Central Government to give directives to State Governments for the implementation of the Act. Section 23 gives powers to the Central Government for prescribing rules, standards and quality of food, qualifications of Food Inspectors, Public Analysts, definitions and conditions of licences, method of analysis, etc.

Section 24 gives powers to State Governments to prescribe the powers and duties of Food (Health) Authorities, Local Authority, Local (Health) Authority, forms of licences, fees payable therefor, distribution of fines between the government and local bodies, etc.

PREVENTION OF FOOD ADULTERATION RULES

The Rules prescribe the qualifications of the Public Analyst, the Food Inspector, their duties, method of drawing samples, sealing, fastening and sending the same to the Public Analyst or Central Food Laboratory. The Rules also lay down the conditions of packing and labelling. They cover the list of permitted food colours, preservatives, anti-oxidants, emulsifying and stabilising agents, conditions for licencing, pesticides residues and other contaminants. Various forms for the use of Food Inspectors, Public Analysts, Central Food Laboratories or others are prescribed in an Appendix to the Rules. Definitions and standards of qualities for various foods have also been prescribed.

Food standards are always kept under review taking into consideration the latest technical and other developments.

ADMINISTRATION OF FOOD LAWS

The main responsibility of implementation of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act and Rules made thereunder rests with State Governments, though the subject is included in the Concurrent List of the Constitution. A few State Governments like those of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Pondicherry have established separate Directorates of Food and Drug Administration, while Delhi has established a separate Directorate for control of food adulteration. In other States, the Act is implemented through the Directors of Health Services who are designated as the Food (Health) Authorities. These States have appointed a few whole-time Food Inspectors depending upon the finances available, while the main thrust of the implementation has been delegated to the Sanitary Inspectors. As such, due to multifarious duties of the Sanitary Inspectors, food laws are not so effectively implemented in States where whole-time Food Inspectors are very few.

In areas within the jurisdiction of Railways, Chief Medical Officers of Railways have been

notified as Food (Health) Authorities. All Assistant Divisional Medical Officers and Health Inspectors have been notified as Food Inspectors in their areas of jurisdiction. At seaports and airports, Health Officers have been appointed as the Local (Health) Authorities for their respective areas, while Sanitary Inspectors have been appointed as Food Inspectors for the purposes of Prevention of Food Adulteration Act.

Many State Governments/Union Territory administrations have constituted Advisory Committees at State/Union Territory level to advise the administration on better and effective implementation of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act.

The extent of samples examined, adulteration detected, prosecutions launched and convictions held under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act in one year, that is the year 1979, is shown in Table 'A'.

FOOD LABORATORIES

There were 80 laboratories in the country in December 1980. These undertake analysis of food articles for the purposes of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act. Eighteen of these laboratories are under the administrative control of local bodies while the others are managed by the State Governments. The list of these laboratories, locationwise, is given below.

Food Laboratories in India in 1980

States

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Andhra Pradesh | 1) Food & Drug Laboratory, Nacharam, Hyderabad |
| 2 Assam | 1) State Public Health Laboratory, Bamunimaidan, Guwahati |
| 3 Bihar | 1) Public Health Institute, Bankipore, Patna |
| | 2) Public Health Laboratory, Jharna Mine Board of Health, Dhanbad |

Table A : Extent of adulteration detected under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act in the year 1979

State/Union Territory	Number of Samples Examined	Number of Samples found Adulterated	Percentage Adulteration	Number of Prosecutions Launched	Number of Convictions
States					
1 Andhra Pradesh	8,177	714	8.73	414	107
2 Assam	1,730	234	13.4	176	4
3 Bihar	—	—	—	—	—
4 Gujarat	8,994	696	7.78	656	369
5 Haryana	3,884	1,087	28	1,145	505
6 Himachal Pradesh	1,387	436	31.43	515	291
7 Jammu and Kashmir	1,188	407	34	633	287
8 Karnataka	5,677	938	16.52	374	44
9 Kerala	18,775	567	3.02	432	145
10 Madhya Pradesh	6,248	1,999	32	1,669	672
11 Maharashtra	14,983	953	6.4	959	261
12 Manipur	—	—	—	—	—
13 Meghalaya	57	23	40.35	19	—
14 Nagaland	—	—	—	—	—
15 Orissa	923	347	37.6	281	34
16 Punjab	3,655	723	19.8	563	168
17 Rajasthan	1,412	498	35	819	655
18 Sikkim	—	—	—	—	—
19 Tamil Nadu	17,008	2,320	13.6	2,458	1,043
20 Tripura	211	48	22.7	19	2
21 Uttar Pradesh	28,921	5,960	20.7	5,214	2,658
22 West Bengal	3,055	595	19.47	519	121
Union Territories					
1 Andaman and Nicobar Islands	—	—	—	—	—
2 Arunachal Pradesh	—	—	Not enforced	—	—
3 Chandigarh	1,268	345	27.2	193	68
4 Dadra and Nagar Haveli	24	1	4.16	1	—
5 Delhi	1,853	159	8.5	144	16
6 Goa, Daman and Diu	37	22	60.00	17	17
7 Lakshadweep	—	—	—	—	—
8 Mizoram	—	—	Not enforced	—	—
9 Pondicherry	333	47	14.1	34	13
Total	1,29,800	19,119	14.7	17,254	7,480

States		States	
4	Gujarat	1) Food & Drug Laboratory, Baroda	2) Regional Analytical Laboratory, Kakkanad P O , Ernakulam, Cochin
		2) Public Health Laboratory, Civil Hospital Compound, Bhuj Distt Kutch	3) Regional Analytical Laboratory, Malapparamba, P O , Calicut
		3) Municipal Health Laboratory, Municipal Corporation, Khandera Market, Baroda	10 Madhya Pradesh
		4) Public Health Laboratory, Surat Municipal Corporation, Surat	1) State Public Health (Food) Laboratory, Gandhi Medical College Campus, Bhopal
		5) Municipal Health Laboratory, Municipal Corporation, Danapith, Ahmedabad	2) Food Testing Laboratory, MGM Medical College Campus, Indore
		6) Public Laboratory, Rajkot Municipal Corporation, Rajkot	3) Public Health Laboratory, Rewa
5	Haryana	1) Food Laboratory, Haryana, Sector II, Chandigarh	4) Public Health (Food) Laboratory, Jabbalpur Division, Victoria Hospital Campus, Jabbalpur
6	Himachal Pradesh	1) State Food & Drug Laboratory, Himachal Pradesh, Kandaghat, District Solan	5) Municipal Corporation Laboratory, Municipal Corporation Building, Municipal Office Road, Indore
7	Jammu and Kashmir	1) State Public Health (Food) Laboratory, Canal Road, Jammu Tawi	6) Municipal Food Laboratory, Municipal Corporation, Ujjain
		2) Public Health (Food) Laboratory, Opposite C D Hospital, Drugjan, Srinagar	7) Municipal Food Laboratory, Municipal Corporation, Jabbalpur
8	Karnataka	1) Food & Water Analysis Laboratory, Public Health Institute, Sashadrin Road, Bangalore	8) Public Health Laboratory, Anandnagar, Raipur
		2) Corporation Health Laboratory, Urban Health Centre, Silver Jubilee Park Road, Bangalore	9) Municipal Health Laboratory, Municipal Corporation, Bhopal
		3) Municipal Laboratory, Mysore Municipality, Mysore	11 Maharashtra
9	Kerala	1) Government Analyst Laboratory, Red Cross Road, Trivandrum	1) State Public Health Laboratory, Pune Cantonment, Water Works Compound, Stavelly Road, Pune
			2) District Public Health Laboratory, Amravati
			3) Distnct Public health Laboratory, 55 Railway Line, Near Maharaja Hotel, Gadgil Bungalow, Sholapur

States	Union Territories
17 Tripura	<div data-bbox="386 274 679 687"> 4) Public Analysis Laboratory, Corporation of Madras, Rippon Building, Park Town P O, Madras 5) Food Analysis Laboratory, Medical College Road, Thanjavur 6) Food Analysis Laboratory, Palamkottai 1) State Public Health Laboratory, Tripura, Agartala </div> <div data-bbox="715 274 876 601"> 1 Delhi 2 Goa 3 Pondicherry </div> <div data-bbox="979 274 1272 706"> 1) Food Laboratory, Delhi Administration, Opposite Civil Line Police Station, Shamnath Marg, Delhi 1) Combined Food & Drug Laboratory, Care of Drugs Controller, Directorate of Health Services Compound, Panaji, Goa 1) Public Health Laboratory, Government of Pondicherry, Godi Medu, Pondicherry </div>
18 Uttar Pradesh	<div data-bbox="386 710 665 896"> 1) Public Health Laboratory, University Campus, Lucknow 2) Public Health Laboratory, D I G Colony, Maqbul Alam Road, Varanasi </div>
19 West Bengal	<div data-bbox="386 919 672 1713"> 1) Central Public Health & Drugs Laboratory, 2, Convent Lane, Calcutta 2) District Diagnostic & Public Health Laboratory, Jalpaiguri 3) District Diagnostic & Public Health Laboratory, General Hospital, Berhampur, Murshidabad 4) Nadia Public Health Laboratory, G M Hospital, P O Kanchrapara, T B Hospital, Kalyani, Nadia 5) District Diagnostic & Public Health Laboratory, Suri, Burdham 6) Asansole Mines Board of Health Laboratory, Asansole, Burdwan 7) Central Laboratory, Corporation of Calcutta, 1-A, Hogg Street, Calcutta </div>

Many laboratories even at the State level are yet to be equipped with the latest instruments for expeditious and reliable analysis. It has been suggested to State Governments that at least one food laboratory in each State should be adequately equipped in order to take up with precision work on the analysis of pesticides, food additives, etc. while routine analysis could be undertaken at regional or district laboratories.

COMMON ADULTERANTS

Listed below are the various food-items more commonly adulterated, along with the more common adulterants used (based on the market samples drawn by Food Inspectors during their routine check-ups).

(1) Milk and milk products Milk is an item of food which has been found to be more commonly adulterated with water or separated milk. Use of preservatives like sodium-bicarbonate or others has also been reported. Butter generally may have excessive moisture and occasionally may contain vegetable fats, etc. Use of starch is also common in milk products.

(2) Non-alcoholic beverages Use of prohibited colours and excessive artificial

sweeteners like saccharine, dirt and filth and occasionally dulcin has been found

(3) Starchy foods Foreign starches, dirt and filth

(4) Spices Use of rice-husk, wheat-bran, foreign seeds and extraneous starches, grit and filth is common Lead chromate for polishing *haldi* is frequently detected Polishing of black pepper with mineral oil has also been found

(5) Sweetening agents Sugar, *bura* and *bandhani*, may contain excessive amounts of sulphur dioxide, a bleaching agent used during processing Honey is adulterated with sugar or commercial invert sugar Ice lollies and candies may contain prohibited colours, artificial sweeteners or fillers *Gur* may be deficient in sugar content and may contain sand and dirt

(6) Tea, coffee Exhausted tea leaves may be admixed with genuine tea leaves Excessive woody stalks or saw dust may also be used as adulterant Coffee has been reported to be adulterated with tamarind husk or black-gram husk

(7) Oils and fats Addition of cheaper oils is very common Castor oil has also been occasionally found

(8) Common salt Use of sand, grit, poor refining, and thus deficiency in sodium chloride, are commonly observed

(9) Fruit products Excessive amount of preservatives, use of prohibited colours, deficiency in fruit content or use of extraneous vegetables are sometimes found in processed fruit products

(10) Cereals and pulses Excessive amount of bran, presence of *kesari* peas, sand, grit, filth and extraneous starches is found Bacterial and fungal contamination, poisonous plant products, metallic contaminants, etc have also been found in some of the products

ROLE OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The Directorate General of Health Services in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is the coordinating Directorate in the Central

Government for the administration of the Food Law in various States/Union Territories For the benefit of State Government/Union Territory administrations, the Central Government organises a number of training courses for Food Inspectors/Public Analysts and senior health personnel engaged in the implementation of Food Laws The Central Government acts mainly in an advisory capacity

To elicit the opinions of consumers, the Government has given representation to voluntary organisations on the Central Committee for Food Standards However, there is a strong need for creating widespread consumer awareness against the practices of adulteration

D S CHADHA

AFTER-CARE SERVICES

The term 'after-care' is borrowed from the field of medicine and medicare The concept closely resembles the medical concept of convalescence, which aims at restoring the patient discharged from a medical treatment centre to his former good health The term 'after-care' is now universally employed in the field of social welfare, especially corrections, to describe specific kinds of aid given to discharged persons or offenders (or probationers), and includes all services and programmes designed to accelerate the rehabilitation of persons who have been, immediately before, through a programme of care or treatment

The Report of the Advisory Committee on After-Care Programmes (1955) appointed by the Central Social Welfare Board invests after-care with the following characteristics and objectives¹ (1) "That it is intended for a person or persons who have undergone a

certain period of care and training within an institution (2) That this person or group of persons has been found to be in special need by reason of a social, physical, or mental handicap (3) That it is intended to complete the process of rehabilitation of an individual and to prevent the possibility of his relapse into a life of dependence or custodial care"

The above definition has two important omissions. It is predicated on the assumption that after-care is primarily intended for or is to be extended only to those persons who are discharged from institutions after a period of institutional care or treatment. The definition ignores persons (probationers, for instance) who have never been through an institution, or have received care outside an institution. The other omission relates to follow-up measures, without which after-care may not be productive of positive results. Follow-up implies a method or a procedure whereby some contact is maintained with the persons concerned either directly through correspondence with after-care beneficiaries, or indirectly through a social service agency, or through occasional visits by an after-care worker.

SCOPE

After-care is a service designed to remove the beneficiary's social dependence, to help him get over his social, mental, or physical handicap, to remove any stigma that may have come to be attached to him because of institutionalisation, and finally to accelerate the process of his rehabilitation so as to make him physically, mentally, socially and vocationally a well-adjusted person.

After-care is not a prolongation of a care or treatment programme. Rather, it is a vital termination of a programme of care or treatment. It presupposes the presence of treatment consciousness in the personnel administering the entire programme preceding and following after-care.

After-care implies extended attention and care bestowed on a handicapped individual

after a certain period of care, treatment and training. After-care is thus a helping process, a service programme, and a constructive vigilance over a particular condition of the individual which handicapped him before. It is mostly executive social work.

HISTORICAL REVIEW

John Howard (1726-1790), the English penal reformer, had inspired several generations of social workers in Europe to work for amelioration of the conditions of prisoners both within and outside penal institutions. Howard's famous prison visiting set the stage for penal reform in England and in Europe. It was not until two decades after the death of Howard that Quakers, who had long interested themselves in the investigation of causes of crime, started in 1808 a society for released prisoners. This event may be considered to be the forerunner of after-care work with discharged prisoners. From these small beginnings, other released prisoners' aid societies sprang up all over Europe, America and elsewhere.

In India, the earliest recorded effort is seen in the starting of small funds called the Claude Martin Funds and the Aid to Discharged Prisoners Fund, the first of which was raised in 1893 in the then United Provinces.² During the four decades that followed, efforts were initiated in several places to start or revive aid-to-prisoners work and after-care work with discharged juvenile and adult offenders.

In 1907, Calcutta started a prisoners' aid society. Bombay followed suit in 1914. Madras formed a similar society in 1921, prior to which a small local society had been formed in Bellary. In 1926, a central society for the then Central Provinces and Berar was inaugurated. In Punjab, during 1923, several districts started local prisoners' aid societies. Early in 1929 all these were merged in one large prisoners' aid society for the whole of Punjab with its headquarters at Lahore.³

The most notable of the efforts were those made by the Salvation Army before World

War I, the work in Bengal and the United Provinces with the help of funds referred to above, the starting of a released prisoner's aid society in Bijapur (Karnataka) and the establishment of an after-care association in 1916 for juveniles discharged from the then reformatory school in Bombay.⁴ The Sheppard After-care Association, which was merged in 1951 with the Bombay State Probation and After-Care Association, was the continuation of earlier efforts. Thus it will be seen that some of the after-care efforts were made much long before the Indian Jails Committee's Report of 1919-20.⁵

The Committee on After-Care Programmes appointed by the Central Social Welfare Board in 1955 addressed itself to diverse after-care problems of physically and/or mentally handicapped and the socially disadvantaged persons who had undergone a certain period of care and training in or with an institution, and had been found to be in special need of aid or assistance to complete the process of rehabilitation

Among the important recommendations of the Committee were those pertaining to social and vocational rehabilitation, namely (a) removal of restrictions on employment (by statutory means or otherwise) of ex-inmates (especially of correctional institutions); (b) reservation of jobs for the physically handicapped for which they could be given special training; (c) grant of small loans to promote self-employment; (d) establishing small-scale industrial cooperatives, wherever feasible; (e) setting up small-scale industries to provide adequate employment, (f) sheltered workshops for special types of after-care beneficiaries, such as the blind; (g) counselling and guidance service for promoting social readjustment of after-care beneficiaries, and (h) legal aid. The Committee also pointed out the deficiencies in the existing vocational and trade training programmes, namely : (i) unsatisfactory level of training, and (ii) unsystematic or unplanned choice of vocations. To improve the quality of training, the Committee recommended employment of

only such persons as not only knew a trade but also possessed the know-how of teaching that trade. With a view to removing this deficiency, the Committee recommended, besides appointment of good craftsman-teachers, a system (a) whereby every inmate is enabled (through vocational guidance, wherever possible) to choose only one trade or craft on which he can concentrate for a reasonable period, (b) whereby training given is related to job opportunities in the community to which the beneficiary is to return, and (c) whereby, in the case of a child for whom self-employment is planned as means of his rehabilitation, his training could be related to his ability to produce articles which can be manufactured from easily available raw materials, and can be easily marketed

A recommendation of the Committee, which deserves special mention, is the one concerning the preparation of inmates for certain vocations (or services) along with trades which will come in handy to them in the event of the trades learnt failing to bring them employment. The typical vocations recommended were nursing, training as ward boys, decorators, canteen boys, tourist-guides, motor drivers, domestic servants, etc.⁶

STRUCTURALISED AFTER-CARE SET-UP

After-care programmes made some headway between 1959-60 and 1964-65 when most of the State Governments decided to set up a network of District Shelters (for men), Reception Centres (for women), and State Homes (separately for men and women). This development came about mainly as the result of the recommendations of the Committee on After-Care Programmes

This network of institutions was designed to speed up the process of rehabilitations of persons who had received or undergone a programme of care, training and treatment either in correctional institutions such as prisons, borstal schools, certified (approved) schools and fit person (approved) institutions, or in non-correctional institutions such as

orphanages, rescue homes and institutions for the physically handicapped. The network provided, wherever necessary, such persons with further vocational and trade training facilities for helping them to become productive and self-supporting members of society.

The programme envisaged setting up three main kinds of institutions, namely, (i) State Homes which were to be of three types, (a) for women and girls rescued from moral and/or physical hazard, (b) for persons released from penal-cum-correctional institutions such as certified schools, prisons, borstal schools, etc., and (c) for persons released from care or non-correctional institutions such as homes for destitute children, homes for deaf-mutes and the blind, beggars' homes, and the like, (ii) Reception Centres, which were meant to serve in the field of preventive or rescue work among women and girls and victims of exploitation, as also in after-care of women and girls released from institutions, including rescue homes, and correctional and non-correctional institutions, and (iii) District Shelters, which served in the field of after-care and catered for male persons discharged from care as well as penal-cum-correctional institutions.

Reception Centres and District Shelters were intended to serve as short-contact centres or transit camps. The average stay of each inmate was ordinarily to be not longer than three to six months. These centres or shelters were primarily meant to act as a 'break-in' for a new life for persons who had been institutionalised and were to return to the community. They were also meant for persons who were in need of some immediate help for their rehabilitation.

Although the financing of all these institutions was the responsibility of State Governments, voluntary social workers and key officials were associated with their day-to-day management.

The maximum capacity of a State Home was to be hundred inmates, and that of a Reception Centre or the District Shelter

twenty-five. A State Home was designed to cater for States-wide needs. Each shelter or each centre was designed to cater for the needs of two or three contiguous districts. Reception Centres and District Shelters were, in a way, responsible for 'feeding' the State Home. This meant that a person going to the State Home from the District Shelter or the Reception Centre went to the State Home only after having been carefully 'screened' at the shelter or the centre, and sometime at the discharging care or correctional institution itself. The shelter or the centre was expected to prepare, as far as possible, persons coming to it for help for getting on to the road of self-help and self-development. Only such persons as could not be rehabilitated at the shelter or centre level were to be sent on to the State Home.⁷

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES IN AFTER-CARE

The recommendations made and the structure for after-care proposed by the Committee on After-Care Programmes were basically sound and practicable. Some of them clearly underlined the urgent need to reorient the existing vocational and trade training programmes both in care and in correctional institutions towards the requirements of the competitive employment market which the former inmates would be called upon to face. They envisaged the introduction of modern tools and equipment for training, revamping of training courses to meet the requirements of modern industry and labour, and provision of adequately trained and competent personnel capable of using better instruction techniques and methods. The crux of the after-care problem thus lay in how speedily and efficiently the institutions would bring about the desired changes or modifications in the training programmes. Unfortunately, very few institutions appear to have taken serious note of the fundamental nexus between the training programmes and the after-care needs of the inmates. This failure accounts for the disappointing performance of the present after-care programmes.

Rehabilitation of the institutionalised person

requires the combined impact of intramural and extramural care and of the training and treatment processes to which the inmate has been or is being exposed to enable him to reach the take-off stage as near the post-discharge point of time as possible. In order that the take-off stage becomes a fact, it is necessary that a meaningful communication be established between the institutional programme and the governmental and community services in the field of after-care, employment, vocational counselling and training, and rehabilitation. The existing communication channels between after-care services and governmental as well as voluntary institutions are, however, found to be too inadequate to bridge the gap between whatever the institution offers the inmate by way of training and work experience, discipline and other facilities, and what he can receive from the after-care agency by way of supportive service. To that end to be truly effective, community after-care services must be joined with institutional services. Only then will the concept of after-care as a vital rounding-off component of the treatment and rehabilitation of the institutionalised person become a reality and yield the desired results.

EXPERIMENTAL AND EVALUATIVE RESEARCH

Effective after-care warrants a searching reappraisal of institutional programmes. Do our care and correctional institutions sufficiently exert themselves to induce in the inmate healthy work habits, to implant desirable attitudes in him, and to strengthen his capacity for self-direction? To what extent do the present institutional arrangements, personnel and programmes modify the inmate's behaviour and outlook on life? Have we been sufficiently concerned with the task of building up his rehabilitation potential? Do we give him the help he needs in his physical, mental, vocational and social re-adjustment? What happens to our former inmates? How many have settled down? How many have returned? We have for a long time travelled along the accustomed road without pausing to

check on our strengths and weaknesses. It is time we seriously started to base our care and correctional programmes and policies on tested results by placing greater reliance on experimental and evaluative research.

PLANNING OF AFTER-CARE SERVICES

After-Care services can be planned and organised in any one of the following ways or possible combinations thereof

(1) *Organisation of work on a territorial basis* In this organisation plan the entire after-care activity (including liaison work with institutions, pre-release social inquiry, supervision of licensees, referral service, employment registration, aid to released prisoners and youthful offenders, and follow-up) is carried out by a federal type of agency. The operating units at the district/*taluka* level affiliate themselves to an apex body, which is responsible for coordinating the work of the affiliating units, and from which they could derive strength for their individual roles. A notable example is the Maharashtra State Probation and After-Care Association, a voluntary organisation enjoying substantial government support.

(2) *Organisation of work by specialisation of functions or services rendered* In this plan a central or regional organisation takes care of the after-care needs of a specific category of handicapped or needy persons. Such an organisation runs service centers, agitates for a better deal for its present and future beneficiaries, and organises publicity campaigns to enlist community and governmental support for its cause. The National Association for the Blind and the Anti-Tuberculosis and After-Care Association, Bombay are examples of this type of organisation.

(3) *Vertical and horizontal organisation of works on a territorial basis and by specialization of services rendered* This plan was recommended by the Advisory Committee on After-Care Programmes (1955). At the apex is the Central Advisory Committee with the State

Advisory Committee as its intermediary base, the After-Care Project Committee providing the primary broad base. The plan also envisaged three major departments of activity (a) after-care of ex-offenders, (b) after-care of the socially handicapped (destitute children, orphans, beggars, etc), (c) after-care of the physically and/or mentally handicapped, and of persons convalescing after treatment for tuberculosis, cancer, leprosy and other diseases.

In this three-tiered plan, the Project Committee is intended to be the nucleus of a District After-Care Association, and to be actually responsible for administering a service unit charged with two main functions (i) to provide the follow-up, supervisory and such other individual services to the outgoing inmates of institutions in a particular district, and (ii) to organise and administer at least one project such as an after-care hostel, an industrial cooperative, or a small training-cum-production workshop, which will meet the needs of groups of such inmates.

(4) *Organisation of work according to the availability of or access to special resources* In a developing society, new opportunities continually arise, which though originally designed for purposes other than after-care, could be profitably used for rehabilitation of handicapped or needy persons discharged from institutions. Rural development schemes, subsidiary occupations such as dairy farming, poultry and pig breeding, etc., could be availed of for the resettlement of skilled or semi-skilled persons with promise of a definite shelter and a definite occupation or job.

(5) *Organisation of after-care service as an extension by an institution of its normal care or treatment service* This necessarily presupposes that the entire institutional programme is dictated by care and treatment consciousness, and that the personnel are motivated by a spirit of service and a genuine concern for the welfare of the former inmates. Operationally as well as from the standpoint of results, this approach would be an ideal arrangement. No

institution or agency will understand an individual's after-care needs as sympathetically and intimately as one which has already cared for him.⁸

TYPES OF AFTER-CARE SERVICES

A person about to step out of the care of correctional institution needs several kinds of help to be able to move on quickly from dependence to self-dependence. These can be grouped under four headings:

(1) *Economic assistance*, in the form of (i) employment assistance, (ii) providing tools or implements to start a trade or craft or small business, (iii) financial aid to meet immediate personal needs such as food, clothing, and personal kit.

(2) *Educational and vocational training assistance*, in the form of (i) apprenticeship in an industrial unit, (ii) vocational training facility or opportunity, (iii) aid to resume interrupted education or training, (iv) aid to become literate.

(3) *Social rehabilitation assistance*, in the form of (i) help toward reconciliation with one's family; (ii) help to remove marital estrangement, if any, and to restore harmony, (iii) individual counselling in personal problems of social readjustment, (iv) moral support (father figure, or big brother role of the after-care worker), (v) encouragement to become a member of a healthy recreation club, interest or hobby or talent group, or to involve oneself in some constructive leisure-time activity.

(4) *Shelter and health restoration* and other supports, in the form of (i) temporary shelter immediately after discharge from the institution, (ii) convalescence care, (iii) free medical aid/check-up, (iv) free legal aid, (v) opening up gradually new horizons for the beneficiary so as to bring cheer, light and laughter into his life.

After-care needs vary from person to person, and so do the types of help required to meet his individual needs. The sooner these are identified by the care institution itself, the

easier it will be for the after-care agency to be in readiness to extend timely help which the beneficiary may need at the time of release so as to be able to move more rapidly towards self-reliance. Ideally, an institution which is well-equipped to provide care services, can provide an after-care infrastructure of its own. The institution can fall back upon this infrastructure to give specific initial help a person may need as he steps out and is taken over by the after-care agency under its charge. In this way, the gap that unfortunately exists today between the institutional care/treatment programmes and after-care services could be successfully avoided.

ROLE OF VOLUNTARY EFFORT

Though reliable statistics on the magnitude of the problem are not available, it can be stated that the problem is a massive one, and the existing after-care services and their administrative framework are grossly inadequate. Over twenty lakh convicted offenders receive care and treatment annually in correctional institutions (prisons), and about one lakh destitute juveniles and youthful offenders go to approved centres/schools, borstal schools and fit person institutions. Besides, there are the large numbers of physically handicapped persons.

The acid test of training and treatment programmes in institutions lies in how far these programmes help the discharged persons to settle down in life, and to what extent their relapse into disorganised life is being prevented. According to an *ad hoc* study made by the Evaluation Committee on Correctional Programme in Maharashtra (1976), about 80,000 prisoners are annually discharged from prisons. Nearly eighty per cent of them are short-terms, and/or require little after-care help. Of the remaining 16,000 (or twenty per cent) prisoners, only 2,400 would need intensive after-care, and it is these persons who form the core of the after-care adult case-load in Maharashtra.⁹ Proceeding on this assumption, annually about 60,000 persons would need some help immediately on

discharge from the adult correctional institutions in the country. Quite a few of them should be able to start their new life with a little initial supportive service. It is believed that those who may need intensive after-care and follow-up might not number more than 30,000 persons. Even so, this is a fairly large number to deal with.

The administrative framework at government level can at best function as a policy making or resource agency. The actual implementation of after-care programmes will have to be left mainly to voluntary effort. In the cause of after-care and rehabilitation of persons, including discharged offenders and the physically handicapped, the importance of enlisting the cooperation and involvement of the people cannot be too strongly emphasized. A committed voluntary agency can play a very useful role in building bridges between the official agency and the community, interpreting the latter's needs, problems and expectations to the former, and in the legal and administrative measures adopted, the executive action taken and resources made available by the former to the community. This happy prospect can materialize only when an appropriate social climate is generated as between the official agency and the voluntary agency.

It may be recalled that a network of after-care homes, shelters and centres was enthusiastically organised by many State Governments during the year 1958-59 to 1963-64 in close cooperation with voluntary social workers and agencies. By the end of 1963-64, over 135 such institutions were functioning all over the country. Unfortunately, official dominance over the management of the programme prevailed in later years, relegating to the background the enthusiasm of voluntary workers, which was originally its mainstay. The net result was that the programme, with its community support greatly weakened, soon met with difficulties. In Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, many of the State Homes (for men) and District Shelters were either closed down, or had their original

scope and character so completely altered that, in effect, they ceased to be after-care institutions. This was done on the specious plea that there were not enough social drop-outs or destitute or needy persons to 'feed' the shelters or the after-care homes for any length of time (as in Andhra Pradesh), or on the ground that there was inappreciable response to these institutions (as in Maharashtra), and that the programme had, in consequence, become too large a financial burden to be continued. The Correctional Programmes Evaluation Committee appointed by the Government of Maharashtra in June 1976, which examined the working of after-care programmes for discharged offenders in Maharashtra, commented thus on the situation "It is some-what extraordinary to observe that these after-care institutions, which were set up after a great deal of thought and planning should have been consigned to the limbo of the history of after-care without even so much as their being given a fair trial for a reasonable period of time. It would appear to be the classic case of the next Pharaoh, by an unkind stroke of the pen, destroying what the previous Pharaoh did ('why should we not put them to some *better* purpose?' argued the next Pharaoh who knew not Joseph'). The upshot of this all was that the after-care clock almost came to be put back to where it was in 1958-59"¹⁰

AFTER-CARE PLAN FOR AN INDIVIDUAL

The value of the institutional programme is best judged in terms of what it actually accomplishes in rehabilitating the person exposed to the programme. In order that its impact may make itself felt in the process of resettlement of the released person, it would be essential to make available to him at least some of the supportive services needed for readjustment when he moves from an institutional environment to an environment which has materially changed since he was last in it.

The following supportive services may be regarded as the essential ingredients of an

after-care plan for the individual (i) finding a sponsor who is respected in the community and respected by the released person and who can be depended upon to help and lead the latter to normalcy, (ii) securing a stable job or occupation for him, (iii) finding a shelter where he can live in peace and security immediately on release, (iv) helping him to come close to a stable family (preferably, his natural family) which will take active interest in his welfare and well-being, (v) encouraging him to have his own family or to take increased interest in his family if he has one already, (vi) helping him to keep himself away from undesirable contacts or old associates, (vii) encouraging him to develop some constructive interest, skill or hobby through which he can gain social acceptance in the community or the neighbourhood, (viii) making him feel that it is up to him to improve the skills he already has acquired, and thereby to develop self-concept (self awareness), (ix) impressing on him the fact that his rehabilitation mainly lies in his own effort, in skilled, hard, honest work which can restore to him the status he once enjoyed in the community, and (x) interpreting with sympathy his background and present status to the local community and to his neighbours whose cooperation is as necessary and important as his own in making a success of after-care.

Institutional care programme and after-care service constitute a continuum. This is the cardinal principle which an after-care worker/agency should bear in mind.

LIMITATIONS OF LEGISLATION

Those who make a plea for social legislation to deal with every conceivable social problem sometimes overlook the fact that our country can boast of wide-ranging social legislation, the crux of the problem is poor enforcement.

The Bombay Children Act (amended in July 1976) has made after-care of children released on licence from approved centres/institutes a statutory responsibility. The amended law defines 'after-care' to mean "care during the

period of release on licence of a child from an approved centre or approved institution'' Undoubtedly this is a progressive provision And yet, in spite of the restricted definition, Maharashtra, which has done pioneering work is developing programmes under the Children Act, is today far from attaining even its limited objective of providing after-care service to all destitute children and youthful offenders who may be in need of it The only practicable alternative should, therefore, be to involve the community in after-care service by adopting one of the organisational plans described earlier, in accordance with the needs of different categories of beneficiaries and the resources available in each community Making statutory provision for employment as part of after-care might not be a practical proposition

MADHUSUDAN S SABNIS

NOTES

- 1 *Report of the Advisory Committee on After-Care Programmes*, Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi, 1955, pp 1-2
- 2 *The Indian Penal Reformer*, Vol 4, No 2, January 1949, p 3
- 3 F A Barker, *Imprisonment*, Christian Literature Society of Madras, 1930, p 172
- 4 M S Sabnis, *Planning and Administration of After-Care Services*, The Children's Aid Society, Bombay, 1958, p 1
- 5 *Ibid*, p 1
6. *Twenty-Ninth Year of Juvenile Correction (Annual Report) 1955-56*, The Children's Aid Society, Bombay, pp 2-3
- 7 *Report of the Evaluation Committee for Correctional Services*, Home Department, Government of Maharashtra, January 1977 (unpublished), pp 161-163
- 8 Sabnis, *op cit*, pp 4-6
- 9 *Report of the Evaluation Committee for Correctional Services*, *op cit*, p 175
- 10 *Ibid*, pp 164-165

BANKS AND SOCIAL WELFARE

The concept of a welfare state is based on rapid economic development and redistributive justice to benefit the largest number of people in the shortest possible time The term welfare should take into account the building up of the dignity of individuals by providing opportunities to work and earn rather than depend on charity It should also have emphasis on provision of such opportunities by the State to the weaker sections of the community The total welfare of the community is best achieved by the State with the largest number gaining access to the national product by participating in economic activities Banking is an instrument of economic development and hence of social change Planned development would be difficult to achieve without the banking system functioning as an integral part of the community

The citizens of a country build the nation and corporate entities like banks, which are the agents of change and can contribute in a large measure in building a welfare state To the millions of small farmers, artisans and agricultural labourers, banks are a source of credit and hope Commercial banks occupy a predominant position in the national economy as the major financial institutions engaged in mobilising the savings of millions of scattered households and organisations in the country and in channelising credit resources into different sectors of national economy The Government nationalised 14 major commercial banks in 1969 "to control the heights of the economy and to meet progressively and better serve the needs of development of the economy, in conformity with the national policy and objectives" It is in this context that a review of the role of commercial banks in a welfare state becomes relevant

DEPOSIT MOBILISATION

Commercial banks are among the major financial intermediaries between savers and

investors. They have embarked upon a deposit mobilisation campaign, and various banks operating in the country—whether in the public sector or the private sector—are vying with one another to scale new heights in deposit growth every year. Towards this end, they have devised different deposit schemes to suit the individual needs of the depositors. Thus, there are monthly deposit schemes to cater to the needs of those who desire to earn a regular monthly income. Then, there are schemes designed to be helpful to parents in providing for their children's education, marriage, etc. There are annuity or retirement schemes meant for those who wish to get a regular monthly income after retirement or a lumpsum payment at the time of retirement. Besides, schemes have been devised to encourage children, housewives, petty traders and others to cultivate the saving habit. Schemes such as the Nitya Nidhi Deposit of Canara Bank or the Pigmy Deposit of Syndicate Bank are thrift schemes with attractive and useful features to facilitate daily savings of small amounts. There are insurance-linked deposit schemes and housing deposit schemes. More schemes are being continually devised. The deposit mobilisation campaign launched by commercial banks has received added impetus in recent years in the form of upward revisions of deposit interest rates. Another development in the same direction is the raising of the insurance cover for bank deposits from Rs 10,000 to Rs 30,000.

Since the nationalisation of major commercial banks, there has been spectacular growth of bank deposits, from Rs 4,646 crores (in June 1969) to Rs 33,283 crores (in June 1980), representing an annual average growth rate of 56 per cent. This rapid growth in bank deposits may be attributed to some extent to the rapid expansion of the branch network of commercial banks to cover unbanked and underbanked areas of the country, particularly the rural and semi-urban areas. Thus, in June 1969, there were in all 8,262 branches, by June 1980, their number had increased four-fold to 32,419. These figures are indicative of the role

the commercial banks have played as deposit mobilisers, as also in stimulating the saving habit among the masses, particularly in remote rural and semi-urban areas.

AGENTS OF GROWTH

The Lead Bank system has opened up vast possibilities for enlarging the branch network of banks and deposit mobilisation in unbanked and underbanked areas. In addition to opening of rural branches in unbanked rural centres, Lead Banks have formulated credit plans for Lead Districts and have striven to raise the standard of living of the people through meaningful development programmes.

In channeling the country's credit resources into essential productive sectors of the national economy according to the Plan priorities, commercial banks play a key role. In the process, they raise productivity, increase employment opportunities, reduce regional structural imbalances, and generally pave the way for faster economic growth and greater social justice. Banks have realised that, with their skilled manpower and large resources, they have a special responsibility for social welfare. Over the past decade, banks have entered fields that were once considered outside their purview: arts and crafts, agriculture and allied occupations, drinking water and afforestation, village and cottage industries, rural development and urban community betterment, and above all rehabilitation of the poor and the backward.

An important feature of lending programmes in recent years has been the rise in the proportion of small loans, several procedural steps have been taken to simplify formalities for obtaining these. There has been a clear change from the security-oriented approach of the past, the viability of a unit has become the basis for priority financial assistance. Banks have evolved a number of new schemes to help and finance the poor, such as schemes for development of lift irrigation and drinking water, schemes for land development, for subsidiary occupations, and

for self-employment Banks have schemes for lending to such sectors as road and water transport, retail trade and small business. These schemes are intended to provide employment opportunities, particularly on self-employment basis, to those sections of the community which, in the past, had hardly any access to a commercial bank. Banks have also drawn up a large number of special schemes to cater to the requirements of borrowers in different professions and vocations. These schemes aim at providing finance not only to technically qualified persons but also to those belonging to such categories as tailors, cobblers, hairdressers, vendors, etc. The total amount available under the different schemes, the period and method of repayments and security and other requirements are determined so as to make it possible for borrowers to avail of credit facilities without undue strain on their business operations. For improving the lot of persons belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes, commercial banks have, from time to time, studied and identified their problems, and prepared special schemes of credit assistance to these sections.

HELP TO WEAKER SECTIONS

Commercial banks have emerged as a major institutional agency in agricultural finance. Their advances to this sector have substantially increased from Rs. 188 crores (in June 1969) to Rs. 2,766 crores (in March 1980). There has been a conscious effort on their part to increase the coverage of small and marginal farmers. At the end of March 1978, for all the public sector banks taken together, small farmers with holdings upto 2 hectares accounted for 67 per cent of the total number of accounts by way of direct finance to agriculture, and 39 per cent of the outstandings thereunder. By December 1979, banks had adopted nearly 90,000 villages and financed 2.70 lakh accounts, involving an amount of Rs. 640 crores under the village adoption scheme.

Banks are helping the weaker sections of the community under the Differential Rate of Interest Scheme. The scheme provides for

credit at the concessional rate of 4 per cent per annum to the extent of Rs. 1,500 for a working capital loan and Rs. 5,000 for a term loan. The illustrative list of eligible persons covers (i) those engaged on a very modest scale in agriculture and/or allied agricultural activities, (ii) those engaged in collection or elementary processing of forest produce or collection of fodder in difficult areas for sale to farmers and traders, (iii) people physically engaged on a modest scale in the fields of cottage and rural industries and vocations, (iv) indigent students of merit going in for higher education; and (v) physically handicapped persons pursuing gainful occupation. Persons whose family income does not exceed Rs. 2,000 per annum (Rs. 3,000 in urban areas), who do not own more than one acre of irrigated land (or 2.5 acres of unirrigated land), and who can be helped to rise above the present economic level through a productive endeavour with assistance from banks and who work largely on their own, satisfy the eligibility criteria. The condition relating to ownership of land does not apply in the case of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Institutions for physically handicapped persons (including those mentally retarded), orphanages, and women's homes are also eligible for credit for productive purposes under the scheme. Credit can be advanced even if the borrowers do not have tangible security of any worth to offer or cannot produce security/guarantee of a well-to-do party. Public sector banks are expected to lend under the scheme a minimum of one per cent of their aggregate advances as at the end of the previous year. At the end of December 1979, Differential Rate of Interest Scheme advances worked out to 0.94 per cent of the total advances in respect of these banks. The scheme covered about 21 lakh persons, and outstanding loans amounted to about Rs. 141 crores.

The Integrated Rural Development Programme of the Government of India, covering agriculture, animal husbandry, soil conservation, minor irrigation, small and cottage industries, and other productive

activities in rural areas, is specially designed for the poorest in the rural areas. The objective of the scheme is to enable beneficiaries to earn additional incomes so that they and their families can cross the poverty line. Under the scheme, for every rupee invested directly by the State in the form of subsidy, credit to the extent of three or four rupees is expected to flow from the banking sector to these families. Three other new schemes of the Government of India are expected to contribute significantly towards improving the lot of the rural masses. These are the National Grid for Rural Godowns, the National Scheme for Training Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) and the Special Scheme for Subsidizing Investment in Minor Irrigation. Commercial banks are expected to play a complementary role in the implementation of these programmes.

In response to the recommendations of the Expert Working Group set up by the Reserve Bank of India to examine the current and anticipated shortage of houses in the country, commercial banks are expected to finance housing schemes to partly offset the estimated shortage. Slum dwellers, scheduled castes and tribes, economically weaker sections and low income groups are to be granted concessional housing loans. Various steps have also been taken to implement the recommendations of the Expert Committee on Consumption Credit, 1976 (Chairman, B Sivaraman), which looked into the consumption credit needs of small borrowers.

With the opening of more and more branches in rural areas, commercial banks have made conscious efforts to take the message of banking to the rural people, through the radio, poster exhibitions and newspaper advertisements. Some commercial banks have also embarked on a programme of banking education. Under this programme, villagers are taught the concept of small savings, self-employment and vocational training, and informed about the facilities available to the weaker sections to start productive ventures. Banks seize every opportunity to participate in

fairs and festivals in which large numbers of people participate. Occasionally, informal seminars are arranged to educate people in improving agricultural practices. Experts in the field are brought to help the farmers in developing their farm operations and ancillary occupations.

As an essential part of the integrated rural development plan for each district, the Lead Bank of the district draws up a credit plan in cooperation with all credit institutions and development agencies operating in the district. Adoption of villages for total development has become a feature not only with nationalised banks but also with other agencies and corporate bodies. The rural poor are being progressively identified and categorised. In the new policy statements they are no longer vague, undifferentiated men in the minds of the planners. There are share croppers, tenants, marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and artisans existing belows the poverty line. Programmes have been designed to give them additional productive assets and employment, to improve their productivity, to raise incomes, and to provide health and educational amenities.

In the last few years, commercial banks have come up with a number of schemes to meet the needs of rural dwellers. Usually, in the name of 'adoption' some piecemeal schemes such as financing of weaker sections, construction of a school or a hospital or a link road are launched. Though these programmes are useful, they do not touch even the fringe of the rural problems and their impact on rural development is very limited. Considering the magnitude of the problem of expanding economic welfare in the country, the commercial banks have only touched the fringe of the problem. There is still scope for them to play a fuller role in improving the quality of life of the masses.

VAST SCOPE

In a developing country like ours the scope for social action or innovative banking is

unlimited Piecemeal action by a few banks or their branches is not enough. Not only bank but also all industrial establishments and other welfare agencies need to come together and chalk out concerted plans of action for developing villages in a phased manner. The project should be time bound. The key-note of the whole programme should be to ensure that the development of the rural areas concerned is primarily undertaken by the local people with the support of the sponsoring agency. The bank or the participating agency should act as a catalyst and extend the needed technical, organisational, administrative, financial and promotional support wherever necessary. It should be a programme of the people to help themselves. It is the involvement of the people which alone can raise their standard of living. Other agencies can give only a helping hand. Rural development can be a success if the villages can develop and provide leaders with a progressive outlook earnestly striving for the welfare of the village. The immediate task is to motivate and cultivate such social workers at the village level.

WELFARE BANKING

The cherished goal of a welfare state can be a reality if only the majority of the people who live in villages are motivated and involved in developmental activities. Bankers with their resources and proven ability have certainly an important role to play. Efforts can succeed only when bank personnel are imbued with a spirit of service and are continuously trained in 'welfare banking'.

Before considering a further enlargement of the role of commercial banks in expanding the area of economic welfare, solutions have to be found for a few issues which have surfaced in the course of the past decade of welfare banking. In the first place, one has to take note of the fact that credit can by itself create nothing. Credit places in the borrowers' hands funds that can be used to purchase productive inputs. Several factors have been identified as essential complements of credit in promoting development. These are opportunities for

putting credit to productive use (both technical and economic), adequate marketing infrastructure to make investment profitable, availability of necessary inputs in adequate quantities, and favourable government policies. Under the circumstances, increased availability of credit alone may have little effect on production and income if other factors militate against the profitable use of credit. Failure of farmers to repay their debts on time or repay them at all, is a serious problem for most of the commercial banks. Delinquency rate is high and the recovery of large amounts of arrears is usually spread over a number of years. Another issue relates to the extent to which commercial banks can enlarge their social responsibilities in eradicating social and economic evils without an adverse impact on their overall profitability.

B RATNAKAR

BEGGARY

Beggary is an old social problem having its origins in socio-religious values of societies. Giving alms to persons who had renounced the world was considered a noble act of religion. Ancient Hindu scriptures mention the receiving of alms as a respectable act of ascetics and Vedic students. The Hindu law givers attached a great sanctity to the act of *bhiksha* (receiving of alms) and prescribed *bhiksha* to Brahmacharis who were devoted to the study of the Vedas. Householders were enjoined to give alms to Brahmins and *sanyasis*. The king and the other affluent people in the Vedic era were duty bound to share their wealth with Brahmins and recluses and provide them with necessary facilities for their existence. Brahmins and ascetics also thought it within their rights to get alms from such persons. There is a legend enshrined in the

Ramayana that Ravana went in the garb of a hermit to get alms from Sita in the forest. However, the fact remains that in ancient India *bhiksha* was neither so widespread nor was it an occupation. Ancient law givers like Manu laid down rules for *bhiksha*. Its indiscriminate practice even by Brahmins was not permissible.¹ Its practice in the past has to be viewed in the context of the then prevailing socio-religious ethos and value system, it was very different from the practice of begging as prevalent at present.

In Buddhism and Jainism also there are references to *bhiksha*. The institution of *bhikus* in Buddhism and *arhats* in Jainism included a group of men and women who renounced the world for the sake of religion and lived on the charity and alms of others. Similarly, the institution of *zakat* existed among the Muslims. In accordance with this system, Muslim Kings and rulers distributed alms and other material requirements to *faqirs* and to those who had renounced the world. For these categories of people, obtaining alms was an 'honourable' act without any stigma attached to it. Similarly, in the Middle Ages, the Christian doctrine of alms giving and the institution of monasticism made the receiving of alms a 'holy' occupation. In the western world begging attracted public attention only after the Black Death.² In England, begging was first sought to be regulated by the Statute of Labourers by Edward III and his Council in 1349 and enacted by Parliament under Richard II in 1378 and by the Great Poor Law of Elizabeth in 1601. Even at that time, it was realised that the problem of begging could not be isolated from social and economic maladjustments and a solution of this problem was not possible without dealing with other related problems like housing, unemployment and lack of adequate health, recreational and educational facilities.³

In India religious sanctions helped in perpetuating the practice of indiscriminate charity. It became as such a part of India's cultural heritage. Begging in the name of

religion was, therefore, recognised as a socially approved act. Religious mendicants, recluses and *sanyasis* of all categories (both genuine and fake) received alms, and people by nature were reluctant to turn them back.

Although there is a gradual decline in religious promptings for alms giving, the people are as a rule, so much bound by tradition that they continue to support religious mendicants and helpless persons. Thus, beggary, whether due to deserved or undeserved want, continues unabated. Beggary became a social problem as traditional forms of social institutions and sources of livelihood started disintegrating under the impact of industrialisation and urbanization, pressure of population and impoverishment. Natural calamities like floods, famines, epidemics, etc., also played their part. The problem of beggary has now assumed fairly serious proportions. Some people take to begging due to sheer destitution while others resort to it as an easy means of livelihood.

Beggars may be broadly divided into four categories: (1) juvenile, (2) able-bodied, (3) diseased, old and infirm, and (4) physically handicapped and mentally ill. In the category of able-bodied beggars fall various types of beggars like casual beggars, fake beggars, and habitual or professional beggars. Habitual or professional beggars wilfully evade work and remain as social parasites although they can very well eke out a living on their own. Beggars generally come from rural areas and throng the cities, places of pilgrimage and tourist centres.

MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM

It is difficult to assess the extent of beggary in the country. No nation wide survey has been conducted so far, but data are available from earlier studies conducted in some cities. In accordance with a survey conducted in the city of Madras in 1956, there were 4,247 beggars of which 2,683 (63.2 per cent) were males and 1,564 females. Children below 10 years constituted 17 per cent of the beggar population.⁴ Similarly, a study conducted by

the Delhi School of Social Work in 1959 showed that there were 3,000 beggars in metropolitan Delhi of which 2,100 (70 per cent) were males and 900 females. A little more than 2,200 (73.3 per cent) were adults and nearly 800 (26.7 per cent) children.⁵ About 1,200 (40 per cent) were physically handicapped and the rest able-bodied. This study also brought into focus the fact that one out of six beggars was afflicted with leprosy.

In a research study conducted by M. V. Moorthy in greater Bombay in 1957, the beggar population in the city was found to be 10,000. Out of this, male beggars constituted 80 per cent.⁶ The study further showed that beggars in the age group 18-40 constituted quite a large group. The study also brought into focus the alarmingly large number of child beggars. It indicated that 20 per cent of the beggars were boys, 9.5 per cent girls and 2.6 per cent babies in arms.

The Department of Social Welfare of Uttar Pradesh conducted a survey of the beggar population in the KAVAI towns (Kanpur, Agra, Varanasi, Allahabad and Lucknow) in collaboration with the respective Municipal Boards. The survey showed that the number of beggars in Kanpur was 3,217, in Agra 1,834, in Varanasi 3,271, in Allahabad 1,795 and in Lucknow 2,155.⁷ The percentage of beggar population in these towns were 0.33, 0.66, 0.42 and 0.33, respectively. Further, in a study on the problem of beggary in Lucknow conducted by Sushil Chandra indicated that out of 400 beggars, 318 were males and 82 females and 20 (5 per cent) were below 10 years of age and 66 (16.5 per cent) within the age-group of 10-20 years.⁸ The Directorate of Education, Government of Tripura, conducted a survey on beggars in 1975-76 which showed that there were 2,140 beggars in the State. Out of this, only 681 (31.4 per cent) were male beggars and 1,459 female beggars. The 1971 Census recorded 10,11,679 beggars and vagrants in the country, of which 5,91,501 were males and 4,20,178 females. Beggars and vagrants in different age groups were as follows:

Age (in years)	No	Percentage
0-14	1,47,963	14.63
15-19	50,935	6.01
20-24	67,699	6.69
25-29	70,391	6.96
30-39	1,57,429	15.56
40-49	1,57,866	15.60
50-59	1,40,374	13.87
60 and above	2,08,492	20.60
Age not stated	530	0.08
Total	10,11,679	100.00

The data show that the problem significantly varied with age. Beyond the age of 30 years, the population of beggars appears to increase. The age-group 60 and above accounts for about one-fifth of the beggar population. There is a sizable population of child beggars (15 per cent) in the country which is indeed a matter for concern.

PROBLEM OF CHILD BEGGARS

Of late, the problem of begging by children has assumed an alarming proportion. The Government of India had set up a Committee in 1968 to study the problem of kidnapping of children and maiming them for purposes of begging.¹⁰ A few case studies in that connection revealed that there were organised gangs who enticed children to the nefarious act of begging and exploited them for purposes of soliciting alms from door to door. The Committee suggested that stringent measures should be taken to deal with this problem by amending section 363A(1) of the Indian Penal Code so that a minimum sentence of three years could be provided to make the law more effective and deterrent. It was further emphasised that the definition of begging under section 363(4)(a) should be amended to make it more comprehensive in conformity with the anti-beggary legislation of some States. As the Central Children Act and the State Children Acts contain provisions in respect of begging, the Committee suggested that the relevant provisions of these Acts

should be examined in the context of section 363A of the Indian Penal Code

Able-bodied professional beggars take to begging as an organised business and find it an easy and 'remunerative' vocation. All such beggars are not necessarily homeless. Some of them have fixed abodes to which they return at the end of the day and retire like normal day labourers. Some of them are married. They have their community life. However, most beggars are homeless and live in the open or in improvised huts. Their earnings are mostly spent on food, smoking and intoxicating drugs.

CAUSATIVE FACTORS

There are several causes of begging. The causal factors can be broadly divided into the economic, religious, psychological and socio-cultural, as detailed below:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (1) Economic factors | Poverty arising from unemployment, indebtedness, loss of source of livelihood, and destitution, arising from natural calamities like floods, earthquakes, cyclones, etc |
| (2) Religious factors | Religious sanction to beggary on special occasions, philanthropic attitude of the people, the general attitude towards life which inclines one to believe in destiny |
| (3) Psychological factors | Unwillingness to work, preference for a life of drift, craving for easy means of livelihood, habit formation, etc |
| (4) Socio-cultural factors | Traditional and hereditary occupation, family disintegration and unwillingness of the extended family and the village community to provide help and support to the needy, impairment of earning capacity of the bread-winner due to long illness, imprisonment or some other factor, desertion, abandonment, absence of welfare or community services to take care of the helpless, disabled, abandoned or destitute people, absence of social security |
| (5) Physical factors | Impairment of capacity to work due to physical or mental handicap or ailment, old age, etc |

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (6) Other factors | Kidnapping or using children to beg, or abetting and encouraging them to beg |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Begging is an offence under the penal law, while destitution and poverty are situations which call for relief under social security laws. The distinction between the two is observed clearly in England where begging is punished under the Vagrancy Acts, while poverty is relieved through Social Security. In India, West Bengal alone follows the British example in this respect. The Bengal Vagrancy Act of 1943 penalises begging; but the Bengal Poor and Unemployment Act, 1939, seeks to give suitable relief to the poor and the unemployed. Relief needs to be provided not only to the poor who beg but also to those who are in the abject condition of poverty although they may not have resorted to begging.

LEGISLATION

The earliest law in India was the European Vagrancy Act of 1874 which was applicable to the whole of the then British India. It was actually meant for persons of European extraction who were found asking for alms or wandering about without any employment or visible means of subsistence. In fact, there was no all-India law against begging as such. Certain sections of the Criminal Procedure Code could be used to prohibit begging. Section 109 of the earlier Criminal Procedure Code prohibited vagrancy. A vagrant was defined therein as one who had no ostensible means of subsistence or who could not give a satisfactory account of himself. Similarly, section 133 provided for penalty for public nuisance. These were, however, indirect ways of dealing with the problem of begging. There is, of course, one direct all India measure to prevent begging, but this is limited to the railways only. The Government of India made a rule under the Indian Railways Act, 1941, prohibiting begging in railway premises and in trains.

There are certain sections in the Bombay Police Act, 1951, The Calcutta Police Act,

1866, the Calcutta Suburban Police Act, 1866, the Howrah Nuisances Act, 1866, and the Madras City Police Act, 1833, which provide for a fine or one month's rigorous imprisonment or detention in a beggars' home for persons found begging. Further, attempts were made to control begging through Municipal Acts. These Acts contain some provisions which made importunate begging and exposure of diseased limbs for the purpose of begging an offence. The main purpose of these laws was to prevent annoyance and public nuisance in urban areas.

There are similar provisions in all the Children Acts. The Children Act, 1960, which is applicable to the Union Territories defines 'begging' under section 2(b) as: (i) soliciting or receiving alms in a public place or entering on any private premises for the purpose of soliciting or receiving alms, whether under the pretence of singing, dancing, fortune-telling, performing tricks or selling articles or otherwise, (ii) exposing or exhibiting with the object of obtaining or extorting alms any sore, wound, injury, deformity or disease, whether of himself or of any other person or of an animal, (iii) allowing oneself to be used as an exhibit for the purpose of soliciting or receiving alms. The Act, under section 2(1), defines a 'neglected child' as a child who is found begging. It also contains provisions against those who exploit children for begging. The Children Acts of various States include similar definitions.

The Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959, defines 'begging' as (a) soliciting or receiving alms in a public place, whether or not under any pretence such as singing, dancing, fortune-telling, performing or offering any article for sale, (b) entering on any private premises for the purpose of soliciting or receiving alms, (c) exposing or exhibiting, with the object of obtaining or extorting alms any sore, wound, injury, deformity or disease, whether of a human being or animal, (d) having no visible means of subsistence and wandering about or remaining in any public place in such condition or manner as makes it

likely that the person doing so exists by soliciting or receiving alms, (e) allowing oneself to be used as an exhibit for the purpose of soliciting or receiving alms. Begging does not include soliciting or receiving money or food or gifts for a purpose authorised by any law, or authorised in the manner prescribed in Greater Bombay by the Commissioner of Police and elsewhere by the District Magistrate, or in any part of the State by the State government.

The Assam Prevention of Begging Act, 1964, also does not prohibit receiving alms in or about any temple or mosque or any other place as may be specified in the order of the State Government.

The Karnataka Prohibition of Beggary Act, 1975, has made a provision under the definition of the term 'beggar' that a person shall not be deemed to be a beggar if he: (i) is a religious mendicant licensed by the Central Relief Committee to solicit alms in the prescribed manner, or (ii) in performance of any religious vow or obligation as sanctioned by custom or religion, collects alms in a private or public place without being a nuisance, or (iii) is permitted in writing by the Central Relief Committee to collect contributions in cash or kind from the public for any public institution, whether religious or secular or for the furtherance of any object for the good of the public, (iv) is a student collecting alms for the prosecution of his studies.

The subject of beggary as such does not figure under any of the Lists contained in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. It may be relatable either to item 15 of the Concurrent List ('vagrancy', 'nomadic and migratory tribes') or to item 9 of the State List ('relief of the disabled and unemployable'). However, programmes of beggary control continue to be implemented by State Governments and Union Territory administrations under their respective anti-beggary laws.

The position in 1980 in different States and Union Territories in respect of the implementation of anti-beggary legislation is as follows

	<i>State/Union Territory</i>	<i>Legislation in force</i>	<i>Year of enforcement</i>	<i>Area covered</i>
1	Andhra Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh Prevention of Begging Act, 1977	1977	Telengana Area, Municipal areas of Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Nellore
2	Assam	Assam Prevention of Begging Act, 1964	1964	Guwahati sub-division
3	Bihar	Bihar Prevention of Beggary Act, 1951	1952	Municipal area of Patna
4	Gujarat	The Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959	1960	Municipal area of Ahmedabad
			1963	Municipal area of Surat
			1965	Municipal area of Baroda
5	Haryana	Haryana Prevention of Beggary Act, 1959	1971	Whole State
6	Himachal Pradesh	Himachal Pradesh Prevention of Begging Act, 1979	Not yet enforced	
7	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu & Kashmir Prevention of Beggary Act, 1960	1960	Municipal areas of Jammu & Kashmir and town areas of Udhampur, Kathua, Baramula, Anantnag, Sopar and notified areas of Katra, Vaishno Devi
8	Karnataka	Karnataka Prohibition of Beggary Act, 1975	1975	Cities of Mysore and Bangalore
9	Kerala	(i) Travancore Prevention of Beggary Act, 1945	1945	Trivandrum Corporation areas and Municipal areas of Quillon and Alleppey
		ii) Cochin Vagrancy Act	1958	Cochin and Malabar districts
		iii) Madras Prevention of Beggary Act, 1945	1945	Municipal areas of Kottayam, Palghat, Calicut, Trichur and Cannanore
10	Madhya Pradesh	Madhya Pradesh Bhiksha Vritti Nivaran Adhiniyam, 1973	Not yet enforced	
11	Maharashtra	The Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959	1960	Bombay and Poona Corporation areas, Kirkee and Poona Cantonment areas and Nagpur City Corporation areas
12	Punjab	Punjab Prevention of Beggary Act, 1971	Not yet enforced	
13	Tamil Nadu	Madras Prevention of Beggary Act, 1945	1945	Whole State
14	Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Beggary Act, 1975	1975	Kanpur, Allahabad, Lucknow, Varanasi, Agra, Mathura, Faizabad and Saharanpur
15	West Bengal	The Bengal Vagrancy Act, 1943	1943	Calcutta Police Area, Howrah, Bally and Golabari Police Station in the district of Howrah, and Tollygunj, Behala, Metiaburj, Barranagar, Dum Dum Police Station in the district of 24 Parganas
16	Delhi	The Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959	1960	Whole of the Union Territory
17	Goa, Daman & Diu	Goa, Daman & Diu Prevention of Beggary Act, 1972	1972	Whole of the Union Territory

The State of Rajasthan has six institutions for various categories of beggars although there is no beggary prevention legislation in the State. These institutions are situated at Jaipur, Ajmer, Udaipur and Tonk. In these institutions inmates are offered rehabilitative programmes.

All these Acts provide for the prevention of begging through detention, training and employment of beggars and also for their custody, trial and punishment. Begging has been made an offence and is penalised on the whole with some exceptions. Begging is a cognizable offence under the anti-beggary Acts and special police squads operate in areas where they are in force. The police can round up beggars and produce them before the courts. In passing an order under the provisions of the legislation, court considers the report of the probation officer with regard to age, character, health and circumstances under which an accused person was living and if he is found to be a beggar, he is sent to an institution for treatment, care and training for a period of not less than one year, but not more than three years. In 1978-79, there were 102 institutions for detention and training of beggars in the country, with a total inmate capacity of 16,350.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

During the Second and Third Five Year Plans, efforts were made to provide outlays in the plans of States to enable them to set up adequate institutional machinery for making the laws effective. Some beggar homes came into existence during the Second Plan, the services have been expanded in the subsequent Plans. In spite of these efforts, it appears that the existing anti-beggary laws are not adequate for dealing with this stupendous problem. Services in the field lack uniformity and standardisation because of variations in legal provisions and administrative machineries. Moreover, the approach adopted in tackling the problem is based primarily on punitive devices with very little scope for diversified treatment and training of various categories of

beggars. Analysing the prevailing situation, the Study Group on Begging and Vagrancy appointed by the Planning Commission in 1965 emphasised the importance of a double-track system and made the following recommendation: "A policy of penal or quasi-penal approach involving apprehension by the police, production before a magistrate, and detention with custodial responsibility is inadequate and wasteful when applied to all beggars and vagrants indiscriminately. The policy of differentiation in approach recommended in the Third Plan deserves to be developed further. Obviously, a double-track system is needed. Some found in the circumstances of begging need primarily social assistance which has to be made available to them as directly as possible, while others need a correctional approach. In developing such a double-track system, our country would be in line with the modern trend in the matter."¹

In spite of legal measures by various States, the problem of beggary persists unabated. Begging by people of different age-groups at public places like shopping centres, recreational areas, railway and bus stations, tourist spots, temples, etc. is very common. It has, therefore, been realised that the existing approach towards beggary control mainly based on punitive measures has failed to yield the desired results. There should be a comprehensive programme of treatment with provisions for punitive action for those who beg wilfully, habitually and professionally. The programme should include outdoor relief, proper utilisation of manpower, after-care and follow-up services, improvement of services, and strengthening of the machinery for enforcement. In addition to institutions for detention, treatment and training, it is necessary to have classification centres to study the cases of beggars thoroughly and to classify them into different categories in accordance with their physical and mental health conditions and their rehabilitation needs.

FUTURE OUTLOOK AND POLICY

The question arises whether legal measures

alone will be sufficient to overcome the festering evil of begging. Unless the people are made conscious of the futility of indiscriminate charity and cooperate with the government in the implementation of anti-beggary laws, this problem will continue to defy all attempts at solution. Indiscriminate alms-giving neither helps the beggar nor society as a whole. On the contrary, it aggravates the socio-economic problems and encourages indolence. This idea should be disseminated through various kinds of media like radio, television, press, pamphlets, etc. An anti-beggary week could also be observed each year and an extensive campaign undertaken to arouse public interest in solving this problem. It should be realised by the alms-giver that charity through an organised programme is the more effective way of relieving human suffering. In fact, the aim of charity should be welfare of the community by making the receivers of alms self-reliant and independent.

Voluntary organisations have an important role to play. There are a number of trusts in operation at various places of pilgrimage. These trusts may be involved in activities connected with anti-beggary programmes. Huge amounts are often spent by way of distributing food to beggars at holy places. Such expenditure may be channelised through well-organised institutions set up under temple trusts. Through this system, beggars of various categories will not only get food but treatment, training and work as well. At each important place of pilgrimage and tourist centre, there is need for a special police squad which can round up beggars at sight and produce them before a court for detention in institutions where they may be classified into different categories and committed to institutions for treatment, training and rehabilitation in accordance with their individual needs. It may be possible to establish work centres for able-bodied beggars on the lines of training-cum-production centres. This will not only provide work but also impart training in some useful crafts.

A review of the beggary prevention

legislation and programmes initiated by various State Governments and Union Territory administrations reveals that there is no uniformity in the implementation of the programmes in the country. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that beggary prevention programmes are coordinated and a general framework for programming and planning is developed. This will not only help in the improvement of the programmes but also facilitate inter-State transfer of beggars detained in institutions. Moreover, the objectives of beggary prevention programmes should be clearly spelt out and widely disseminated to generate public awareness. For want of proper classification of beggars and assignment to useful crafts, their employment and rehabilitation after release from institutions become difficult. The classification of beggars apprehended, presented before courts and committed to institutions needs to be further systematised to facilitate their rehabilitation. It is also necessary to set up special courts for speedy disposal of cases. Inordinate delay in processing cases of apprehended beggars often gives rise to uncertainty and indiscipline. The institutional programmes should be reoriented and diversified so as to cater to the individual needs of various categories of beggars. One very important ingredient of the programme, namely, after-care and follow-up services, is almost non-existent at present. Necessary provisions should be made in the existing Acts so that inmates who are released from various institutions may avail themselves of the after-care facilities which help in minimising the chances of their return to begging. There should also be a continuous follow-up programme to keep track of the discharged inmates.

The problem of inter-State migration of beggars has, of late, assumed alarming proportions. It may be possible to transfer beggars who are detained in institutions to other institutions in the States of their origin. The anti-beggary legislation of some States provides for transfer of a person detained in an

institution to any institution of like nature in another State to which he belongs with the consent of that State. The aim of such a provision is that the individual will have an opportunity to be treated, trained and rehabilitated in an atmosphere to which he is accustomed since his infancy. In this connection it may be added that the Committee for the Control of Leprosy set up in 1955 by the Ministry of Health, Government of India, made an attempt to elicit the views of State Governments regarding the feasibility of repatriation of leprosy-afflicted beggars. Most States were reported to have considered repatriation desirable.

Coordinated efforts are necessary to streamline the programmes so far developed in private and public sectors. All the agencies concerned, namely, Social Welfare Department, Health Department, Railways, Transport, Tourism and voluntary organisations should coordinate their efforts to deal with the problem of beggary.

It may be possible to develop a network of social services in the community which can meet problem or crisis situations. The main difficulty is that in our society people have a passive attitude towards the needs of individuals who are socially and physically handicapped. An active involvement of the people in beggary prevention programmes through local committees is of the utmost importance.

Committees at various levels with representatives from the departments and organisations concerned may occasionally meet and deliberate on this problem in the context of each particular area and suggest measures for further intensification of efforts.

From a wider standpoint the problem of beggary is linked with a number of other problems like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, squalor, disease, lack of economic development, etc. It has, therefore, to be considered also in the context of overall national progress, full employment, development of social security and social

services and general improvement of the standards of living of all sections of the people.

S.K. BHATTACHARYYA

NOTES

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BONDED LABOUR

In Indian society the origin of bonded labour system can be traced to the beginning of the *Varna* system under which *Sudras* were

placed at the lowest rung and were duty-bound to serve the people of other three *Varnas*. Over the years the system deteriorated and became highly exploitative,—socially, economically and physically—and this manifested itself in various ways in different parts of the country. The bonded labourers are known by different local names, for example, *Jeetha*, *Paliathanam*, *Gothis*, *Vettis* or *Palerus* in Andhra Pradesh, *Halis* in Gujarat, *Harvahis*, *Mahidasi*, *Halis*, *Kamias* and *Harwashees* in Madhya Pradesh and *Paniyan* in Tamil Nadu.

DEFINITION

The National Commission on Labour observed, "Bonded labour can best be described in terms of debt bondage fixed for a time or a life-time or hereditarily descending from father to son in some cases".¹ The Indian School of Social Science defined bonded labour in terms of a social agreement between a debtor and creditor under which the debtor agrees to render labour or personal services to the creditor without remuneration in lieu of the satisfaction of the debt or part of debt or interest on principal amount for a specific period or till the debt is satisfied or repaid.² In the Twenty-Fourth Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes the term 'bonded labour system' has been used to mean: "If persons belonging to any particular caste or community are forced or partly forced to work for a creditor under an agreement either without wage or for nominal wage which was less than the prescribed minimum wage they would come under the definition of Bonded Labour System".³ In the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 (hereinafter referred to as the Act), bonded labour has been defined as "the system of forced or partly forced labour under which a debtor enters, or has, or is presumed to have entered, into an agreement with the creditor to the effect that (i) in consideration of an advance obtained by him or by any of his lineal ascendants or descendants (whether or not such advance is evidenced by any document) and in

consideration of the interest, if any, due on such advance, or (ii) in pursuance of any customary or social obligation, or (iii) in pursuance of an obligation devolving on him by succession, or (iv) for any economic consideration received by him or by any of his lineal ascendants or descendants, or (v) by reason of his birth in any particular caste or community, he would (1) render by himself or through any member of his family, or any person dependent on him, labour or service to the creditor, for specified period or for an unspecified period, either without wages or for nominal wages, or (2) forfeit the freedom of employment or other means of livelihood for a specified period or for an unspecified period, or (3) forfeit the right to move freely throughout the territory of India, or (4) forfeit the right to appropriate or sell at market value any of his property or product of his labour or the labour of a member of his family or any person dependent on him, and includes the system of forced or partly forced labour under which a surety for a debtor enters or has or is presumed to have entered into an agreement with creditor to the effect that in the event of the failure of the debtor to repay the debt, he would render the bonded labour on behalf of the debtor".⁴

Two essential ingredients of bonded labour are (1) indebtedness and (2) forced labour. The National Commission on Agriculture has observed "The prominent feature of the system of bonded labour is that a man pledges his person or sometimes members of his family against a loan".⁵ Indebtedness has also been labelled as "the mother of the problem of bonded labour".⁶ Being compelled by the exigencies of the situation, the bonded labourer is compelled to take loan and do forced labour in lieu thereof. Thus bonded labour in our country is forced labour under indebtedness which is the characteristic of all but seventeen per cent of the bonded labourers.⁷

SALIENT FEATURES

Analysis of the available material on bonded

labour generally indicates the following salient features: (i) Bonded labour is forced work or service done by the debtor for the creditor (ii) It is done under some oral or written agreement entered into by the debtor with the creditor. (iii) It is done in lieu of some loan in cash or kind or interest thereon or both or in consideration of any kind of protection or shelter given by the master or in pursuance of any customary or social or inherited obligation or by dint of birth in any particular caste or community. The amount of loan taken is usually small. Since the accounts are maintained by their masters, bonded labourers are in many cases ignorant of the rate of interest and the precise sum they owe.⁸ (iv) The bonded labourers are generally extremely poor. Most of them neither own any cultivable land nor any big cattle. The value of their household goods and other family property is generally nominal. Many of them are, therefore, forced to take oft-repeated loans mainly for domestic purposes.⁹ They become so dependent on their masters that they dare not antagonise them. (v) In some cases, the entire family is forced to undergo bondage.¹⁰ Even small children are not spared.¹¹ (vi) Not only the loanee and the family members of his generation but also his lineal descendants are obliged to do forced work or service for the creditor.¹² (vii) Fear of not only the withdrawal of the basic means of subsistence by their masters but also of being subjected to varied kinds of pains compels bonded labourers to do forced work or service. Efforts made by bonded labourers to flee from bondage generally prove to be abortive and subject them to various kinds of humiliations and tortures. They do not have the freedom to move freely, much less to look for alternative employment. (viii) Bonded labourers, left to themselves, are not in a position to get rid of their bondage because they do not have the means necessary for fulfilment of even their basic needs, let alone the repayment of loan. They are entirely dependent upon their masters for meeting their minimal needs. (ix) Bonded labourers develop the psychology of being

dependent upon and surviving on the mercy of their masters. Many of them consider themselves incapable of earning their livelihood independently. Some of them become so much used to this type of work that they do not want to leave their masters.¹³ (x) Instances have been reported of bonded labourers, particularly young ones, being sold and resold.¹⁴ (xi) Bonded labourers, at some places, are required to wear ornaments symbolising bondage.¹⁵ (xii) Bonded labourers are sometimes forced to pay various kinds of unlawful taxes.¹⁶ (xiii) The female folk of the debtors are sometimes compelled to undergo many types of humiliation and exploitation for the personal pleasure of the creditors.¹⁷ (xiv) Bonded labourers are generally from the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. They are illiterate and cut-off from the outside world. (xv) Bonded labourers work day and night without any holiday, rest interval, fixed hours of work or facilities and the wages paid to them are paltry and much below the minimum wages prevalent in the area.¹⁸ (xvi) In case of illness or physical weakness, bonded labourers are obliged to send substitutes.¹⁹

TYPES OF BONDAGE

There are five main types of bondage. (1) ideal type of bondage, (2) inter-generational bondage, (3) multiplicative bondage, (4) share-cropping-cum-bondage, and (5) widow bondage.

The ideal type of bondage is one under which the master limits his exploitation and allows the bonded labourer to survive at the level of the unequal relation. It is of two types: (i) customary (traditional) bondage which is characterised by overt paternalism of the master whose interest lies in giving advances to the bonded labourer who feels obliged and works for him. The relationship is maintained and nurtured by the social control of the master over the life of the bonded labourer, and (ii) modern bondage under which there is impersonal relationship between debtor and creditor. The master who owns enough land to

be able to employ a number of agricultural labourers tries to extract maximum work. He is more interested in extracting labour from the labourers than in usury. Devoid of opportunity of getting work in the competitive labour market, the labourer remains among the poorest sections of agricultural labourers.

Under inter-generational bondage, on demand from the master, the physically weak father or grandfather is replaced by his son as successor in bondage. This practice is linked with child bondage and most of the child bonded labourers are actually the sons of bonded labourers who have already been in servitude for a long period. Multiplicative bondage arises when there is repeated incurring of debts due to increasing impoverishment of the bonded labour family arising from the absence or the loss of assets and shortage of jobs in the rural labour market.

Under share-cropping-cum-bondage, the labourer works for the master as a bonded labourer, and at the same time cultivates a small plot of land allotted by the master. The labourer delivers 50 per cent of the produce to the master and the master considers the remaining portion of the produce as the wages for the share-cropper-cum-bonded labourer.

Widow bondage is one under which a widow after the death of her husband takes a loan in order to be able to perform the death rites and she works in the master's household or does light agricultural work. She does not receive even nominal wages but daily food is given to her.²⁰

CAUSES OF BONDED LABOUR

Multiple factors are responsible for this practice. They may be categorised as economic, ecological, socio-cultural, political, religious, and educational factors.

In the category of economic factors which lead to the bondage of the worker can be included loss or destruction of crops due to droughts and floods, concentration of land in a few hands, fragmentation of land holdings, non-availability of essential facilities for

agriculture, scarcity of institutional credit, imbalance in the demand and supply of labour in the rural market, high rates of land revenue, insecurity of land tenures, meagre income from forest produce, etc.

Ecological factors which sustain the practice are in the form of inaccessibility of many areas due to non-availability of adequate means of transport and communication.

Socio-cultural practices related to marriage, death, etc. lead to incurring of heavy debts and hence bondage. In some cases bondage springs from the desire of the victims of various types of oppressions and suppressions to seek protection from influential persons in society.

Among political causative factors were the expansionist and imperialist tendencies resulting in battles which led to a large number of war captives.

In the group of religious factors can be included religious prescriptions enjoining upon *Sudras* the sacred duty of serving the other three *Varnas*.

Widespread illiteracy and ignorance especially among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes have helped to sustain the practice as they had no alternatives to look forward to.

Among different factors, economic factors have played the most predominant role because ultimately it is economic necessity which forces people to debt bondage and their exploitation. However, in many cases the bondage has originated from customs and traditions²¹ and the pressure of social situations²¹.

MAGNITUDE OF BONDED LABOUR

Of the 22 States and 9 Union Territories in the country, information is available on the existence of bonded labour in 11 States, viz., Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Kerala (Wynad District only), Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.²² According to the findings of a survey jointly undertaken by

the Gandhi Peace Foundation and the National Labour Institute in 1978, the number of agricultural bonded labourers in these States (except Kerala where the problem is prevalent in a very small measure) is estimated to be 26.17 lakhs. The largest concentration is in Uttar Pradesh (5.50 lakhs), followed by Madhya Pradesh (5.00 lakhs), Orissa (3.50 lakhs), Andhra Pradesh (3.25 lakhs), Tamil Nadu (2.50 lakhs), Karnataka (1.93 lakhs), Gujarat (1.71 lakhs), Bihar (1.11 lakhs), Maharashtra (1.00 lakh) and Rajasthan (0.67 lakhs) in that order.²³ Bonded labourers identified and freed in these States, except Maharashtra, number 1.21 lakhs.

Most of the bonded labourers, 86.6 per cent of the total, come from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Twenty-five per cent of bonded labourers are below the age of 20 years. Thirty per cent of bonded labour families send two or more of their family members into bondage. About twenty per cent of bonded labourers have not taken any loan *de jure*. A labourer is in bondage for six years on an average. In Bihar, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh the duration of bondage is longer (above ten years) whereas it is shorter in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Orissa (three to four years). Fifty-five per cent of bonded labourers take loans for the purpose of domestic expenditure. Forfeiting the right to seek alternative employment is one of the essential elements of bondage. The largest group of masters (45 per cent) comes from upper caste Hindus, whereas 15 per cent belong to backward classes. Fifteen per cent of the masters belong to scheduled castes and 13 per cent to scheduled tribes. Fifty-one per cent of the masters employ two to five bonded labourers, 5.5 per cent employ six to ten bonded labourers, whereas 40 per cent of the masters keep only one bonded labourer.²⁴

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

The proclamation of the British Parliament to abolish bonded labour throughout the British Empire in 1833, the Forced Labour Convention of 1930, the Universal Declaration

of Human Rights, 1948, the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery adopted by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries convened under the auspices of the United Nations in 1956, and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957, have been the main international covenants bearing on the abolition of bonded labour in India.

The Bengal Regulations, 1806, Bihar and Orissa Kamiauti Agreements Act, 1920, Bihar Money Lending Act, 1939, Bihar Moneylenders (Regulation of Transactions) Act, 1939, Bombay Moneylenders Act, 1946; and Orissa Debt Bondage Abolition Regulation, 1948 are some of the legislative measures undertaken by State Governments to control the problem of debt bondage before the adoption of the Constitution in 1950 which in Article 23 provides "Traffic in human beings and *begar* and other similar forms of forced labour are prohibited and any contravention of the provisions shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law." Some of the important legislative measures taken by State Governments after the adoption of the Constitution are Andhra Pradesh (Scheduled Tribes) Moneylenders Regulation, 1960, Andhra Pradesh (Scheduled Areas) Moneylenders Regulations, 1960, Sargi System Abolition Act, 1961, Orissa Debt Bondage Abolition Rules, 1963, Laccadives, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands (Debt Cancellation and Grant of Loans) Regulation, 1964, Laccadives, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands Land Regulation and Tenancy Regulation, 1965 (enforced in 1968), Assam Rural Indebtedness Relief Act, 1975, U.P. Landless Agricultural Labour Debt Relief Act, 1975, Orissa Dadan Labour Control and Regulation Act, 1975, and Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Services and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1979.

There is provision under section 374 of the Indian Penal Code that "whoever unlawfully compels any person to labour against the will of that person shall be punished with

imprisonment of either description which may extend to one year or fine or with both"

Serious efforts in the direction of statutory abolition of bonded labour throughout the country were made only after the announcement of the Twenty-point Programme in 1975 which unequivocally declared, "The practice of bonded labour is barbarous and will be abolished. All contracts or other arrangements under which services of such bonded labourers are secured, will be declared illegal." In pursuance of this declaration, the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Ordinance, abolishing bonded labour with immediate effect, was promulgated on 4 October 1975 which became the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act on 2 February 1976. The rules under the Act were framed on 28 February 1976.

EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENT

A Centrally sponsored scheme for the rehabilitation of bonded labourers was taken up in 1978-79. The State Governments may prepare and submit schemes, according to the guidelines, and become eligible to Central assistance on a matching grant basis. The schemes may be land-based (e.g. identification and allotment of surplus land), non-land-based (e.g. supply of mulch cattle) and skill/craft-based (e.g. identification of skill/craft, supply of raw material and working capital). During 1978-79, for the rehabilitation of 5,947 bonded labourers, a sum of Rs 97.64 lakhs was released to the State Governments as Central assistance. A sum of Rs 53.62 lakhs was released for the rehabilitation of 6,858 labourers during 1979-80. The Planning Commission recommended an outlay of Rs 25 crores for the rehabilitation of bonded labour in the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), and Rs 3.25 crores for the annual plan, 1981-82. During 1979-80, the National Labour Institute organised special camps to educate and organise bonded labourers. During 1980-81, evaluation studies were conducted in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Eleven blocks having concentration

of bonded labourers have been included in the 300 additional blocks under the scheme of Area Planning for Employment as part of the Integrated Rural Development Programme. Concessions in respect of relaxation in age upto 40 years and priority in recruitment to suitable posts in Group 'C' through Employment Exchanges, have been extended by the Central Government to released bonded labourers. State Governments have also been requested to extend similar concessions.²⁶

The Small Farmer's Development Agency (SFDA) Programme, Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Command Area Development (CAD) Programme, Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), National Scheme of Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Pilot Projects for Hill Areas Development, Sub-Plan for Tribal Areas organised into Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP), and Revised Minimum Needs Programme (RMNP) reflect indirect efforts made by the government to provide relief to the rural poor including bonded labourers. The impact of these, however, is yet to be assessed.

PROGRESS

Progress in the matter of identification, emancipation and rehabilitation of bonded labourers as reported by State Governments up to January 1981 is as follows:

State	Number of bonded labourers	
	Identified and freed	Rehabilitated
1 Andhra Pradesh	12,701	9,146
2 Bihar	4,603	2,803
3 Gujarat	42	42
4 Karnataka	62,699	52,868
5 Kerala	700	308
6 Madhya Pradesh	1,531	58
7 Orissa	352	343
8 Rajasthan	6,000	6,000
9 Tamil Nadu	27,874	27,670
10 Uttar Pradesh	4,469	4,469
Total	1,20,971	1,03,707

Source: Ministry of Labour, Government of India, New Delhi; Report 1980-81, p. 132.

The figures relating to the number of bonded labourers do not reflect the real magnitude of the problem which is much more pervasive than reported by the States because bonded labour in one form or another has been one of the striking characteristics of our rural economy. It is also evident that progress in the direction of rehabilitation has not been satisfactory despite the constitution of statutory Vigilance Committees by all the States and the Central Review Committee under the Ministry of Labour. The main reasons for slow progress are (1) organised resistance by powerful vested interests, (2) lack of proper implementation of the Act mainly due to absence of adequate enforcement machinery, (3) absence of favourable public opinion, (4) unpreparedness of bonded labourers themselves due to their total dependence on their masters and uncertainty regarding timely availability of needed assistance, (5) inaction on the part of Vigilance Committees; and (6) lack of desired interest on the part of voluntary organisations mainly because of the possibility of their coming into conflict with vested interests.

SUGGESTIONS

The problem of bonded labour is, in a sense, a reflection of our social and economic system. Legislation by itself will not eradicate the practice. A balanced integrated approach based on growth with social justice and creation of productive employment and generation of income on a widely dispersed basis will have to be adopted. A time-bound package of programmes directed towards providing relief from poverty and removal of poverty will have to be organised in three phases. Bonded labourers should be brought within the reach of direct programmes in the first phase; organisations and institutions among them should be developed in the second phase, and change in the social structure and diminution in the concentration of economic power should be brought about in the last phase.

Specifically, measures relating to economic development, education, training, housing, administration, legislation, research and publicity have to be adopted.

Measures of economic development may include incentive awards by the government to persons giving information regarding bonded labour; adequate and immediate financial help by the government to the released bonded labourers till they start earning, additional help for marriage of unmarried girls in their families and the same help to their husbands, if they are landless, as is given to bonded labourers, allotment of available surplus cultivable land in compact blocks after consolidation, handing over possession and conferring tenancy rights, assistance in taking up other occupations, if no surplus land is available, and motivating them to go out in search of jobs, subsidy for the purchase of agricultural inputs and milch cattle, interest free loans from nationalised banks and other institutionalised financing agencies for buying inputs and equipment for productive enterprises, facilities for marketing of agricultural produce at reasonable rates; promotion of subsidiary occupations and reservation of certain lines of production like printing of textiles for the 'household and small producer sector not using power' and involvement of bonded labourers in such productive enterprises.

Measures relating to education and training may consist of provision of various facilities necessary for the education of children of bonded labourers, compensation for the loss suffered by the family due to the incidence of school-going among children supplementing the family income, organisation of adult education programmes, technical guidance and training necessary for scientific cultivation, and enrolment of youth from the families of bonded labour in special institutions providing vocational training.

Housing measures may include allotment of house sites having attached land for the construction of work shelters, subsidy for the

construction of houses and work shelters; and facilities like drinking water, electricity, drainage, paved roads, etc.

Measures relating to administration and legislation may consist of effective enforcement of the Minimum Wages Act and Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act by strengthening the existing enforcement machinery, posting officials in areas having concentrations of bonded labourers, conferring such powers and imposing such duties on District Magistrates as may be necessary for the effective implementation of the Act; activating Vigilance Committees by frequently holding their meetings, providing necessary transport and communication facilities to members, and associating village Panchayats and other voluntary organisations working in this field in the tasks of enforcement, preparation of register of bonded labourers by local authorities, amendment of the Act and rules made thereunder to make the offences committed under the Act non-bailable, laying down the intervals at which meetings of the Vigilance Committee must be held

Measures relating to research may include organisation of surveys by research institutes/universities to explore the incidence of bonded labour and to evaluate the effectiveness of the schemes of rehabilitation

Publicity measures may consist of organisation of a vigorous campaign among bonded labourers to convince them of the sincere intention of the government to emancipate and rehabilitate them, to acquaint them with various provisions of the Act and rules made thereunder, and inform them of the schemes under implementation by different departments/agencies, conditions of eligibility and procedure for getting benefits

SURENDRA SINGH

NOTES

- 1 *Report of the National Commission on Labour*, 1969, p 409

- 2 Indian School of Social Science, *Bonded Labour in India*, India Book Exchange, Calcutta, 1976, p 1
- 3 *Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1975-76 and 1976-77 (Twenty-fourth Report)*, p 27
- 4 Section 2(g), *The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act*, 1976
- 5 *Report of the National Commission on Agriculture*, Vol XV, *Agrarian Reforms*, 1976, p 254
- 6 Indian School of Social Science, *Bonded Labour in India*, op cit, p 3
- 7 Sarma Marla, *Bonded Labour in India—National Survey on the Incidence of Bonded Labour*, Bibha Impex Private Ltd, New Delhi, 1981, p 165
- 8 *Ibid*, pp 163-65
- 9 *Ibid*, p 24
- 10 A landlord in the Bomanpalli hamlet of the Pattikonda taluk in Kurnool district had forty 'sungah' families that were not only forced to work in the fields for a paltry wage of two kilograms of Korra (coarse gram) but were also ill-treated and tortured (*The Hindustan Times*, 6 June 1976)
- 11 Domini of village Burja in Sadah sub-division of Koraput district in Orissa was purchased for a pittance at the age of five (*The Hindustan Times*, 5 June 1976) Armugham of a village in South Arcot district in Tamil Nadu was bound at the age of eight in return for a loan of Rs 100 to his father (*The Indian Express*, 18 November 1978) Anirudh Majhi aged 10 of Bhandaria Block, South Bihar, was bonded to village Mahajan, Bhola Sahu, who gave him two seers of maize or three seers of paddy as *Bani* per day in addition to Rs 5 per month (Indian School of Social Science, op cit, p 116)
- 12 Sarma Marla, op cit, p 135
- 13 *The Hindustan Times*, 20 March 1976
- 14 Jeeva, an orphan boy from a village in Udaipur district of Rajasthan was initially mortgaged to Sivaram by his uncle for Rs 80 at the age of five After three years he was again sold to Kuber Lal for Rs 200 out of which money owned to the first mortgager was paid Later on, he was sold to another landlord for Rs 300 out of which the second mortgager was paid (*The Hindustan Times*, 18 November 1978)
- 15 The women of primitive Panias who were bonded to the Chettys were putting on the burnished copper bracelets on their bare left arms (*The Hindustan Times*, 20 March 1976)
- 16 A sickle tax of Rs 2 19, plough tax of Rs 1 87, widower tax of Rs 1 25 and bachelor tax of Re 1 per annum are some of the levies that the tribal population of the Kalrayan Hills in South Arcot district have been paying for generations to three

- Jagirdars under a feudal system of bonded labour (*The Hindustan Times*, 23 August 1976)
- 17 *The Hindustan Times*, 20 March 1976
 - 18 *The Hindustan Times*, 22 April 1976, *Report of the Commissioner of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1975-76 and 1976-77* (Twenty-fourth Report), p 23, and Sarma Marla, *op cit*, pp 26-29
 - 19 *The Indian Express*, 18 November 1978, and Sarma Marla, *op cit*, p 134
 - 20 Sarma Marla, *op cit*, pp 131-41
 - 21 Choteekuts, Bassis and Ongalikuts in the pre-independence period voluntarily used to take shelter under powerful persons (*The Hindustan Times*, 7 December 1975)
 - 22 This is suggested by the *Reports of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes*, information supplied by the Ministry of Labour and other published material (Sarma Marla, *op cit* p 10) Despite denial, bonded labour does exist in some of the remaining States and Union Territories *Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1975-76 and 1976-77* (Twenty-fourth Report), p 27
 - 23 Sarma Marla, *op cit*, p 144
 - 24 *Ibid*, pp 144-146
 - 25 Ministry of Labour, Government of India, New Delhi, Report 1980-81 p 64
 - 26 *Ibid*, pp 64-65

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Death penalty as a form of punishment, and its deterrent value especially for the crime of murder, has been a subject of intense though inconclusive debate both at national and global levels. Only a very few societies have stilled the debate by abolishing death penalty as a matter of law or practice. As of 1980, 21 countries have abolished death penalty as a matter of law, 16 have abolished it also for the crime of murder. Five countries have abolished capital punishment not through law but through custom; although they retain death penalty on statute books, they have not executed a single person for the last forty years. Six countries

have not recorded an execution for the last ten years¹

But in a world community of 154 States, only 37 have been 'relatively' immunised from the raging debate on capital punishment, 'relatively' because there often surfaces even in some of these States public opinion claiming its revival. And most abolitionists retain scope for capital punishment for offences against the State. We also witness swings of the pendulum. Abolitionist states are known to reintroduce death sentence for a period and then revert to its abolition. For example, Brazil abolished capital punishment in 1890, reintroduced it in 1969, and reverted to the abolitionist position in 1979.²

Thus, controversy persists both in abolitionist and retentionist societies. But, obviously, it is more sharp and sustained in the latter. India is illustrative of this reality. In thirty-three years of independence, there have been several bills and resolutions in Parliament seeking abolition of the penalty³, a five year study by the Law Commission of India resulting in a 1967 report of 724 pages, and two unsuccessful challenges to the constitutional validity of death sentence before the Supreme Court of India. There have been amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code rendering death sentence progressively to be an exceptional rather than normal punishment for murder. And there is much debate in judicial decisions as to how far the scope of mitigating grounds should be extended in the area of the death penalty.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY POSITION

In India, as in most civilized societies, the trend has been towards restriction of occasions and offences justifying the award of capital punishment. Death sentence was clearly known and practised in ancient and mediaeval India.⁴ The punishment was not abolished even by Asoka. In Muslim law, capital punishment was permissible in addition to the offences of wilful homicide for offences such as *zina* (unlawful conjunction of sexes), repeated

commission of offences of larceny, and highway robbery. Before the advent of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, more capital offences were recognized. For example, the category of justifiable homicides under Muslim law was brought within capital offences by the Bengal Regulation of 1799, Regulations of 1795 and 1802 declared various types of infanticide to be murders punishable with death, the Bengal Regulation of 1817 exposed persons convicted of murder in prosecution of robbery, burglary or theft to capital punishment. Escape from penal transportation of life, sodomy, rape, robbery with wounding, burglary with assault, arson endangering life, forgery, riotous destruction of public buildings and exhibition of false lights were capital offences by 1843, in addition of course to offences of murder, mutiny and 'treason' defined variously from time to time. The Company administration and law was not just characterized by an *ad hoc* expansion of capital offences. It was also marked by gradual introduction of more elaborate procedures for the determination of guilt and punishment. But the period was also characterized by a separate regime of trial procedures for British and European people. Englishmen (as well Europeans and Americans) were *not* amenable to trial from 1793 to 1923 by Indian judges in the *mofussil*.⁵ How far this form of jurisdictional and social bias introduced disparities in the incidence of death sentence affecting 'whites' and 'natives' is a matter still awaiting investigation.

The trend towards a sharper crystallisation of capital offences matured during the drafting of the Indian Penal Code. The first Report on the draft Penal Code prepared by the Indian Law Commission in 1936 did not find it desirable "wholly to dispense with this punishment". But they were convinced that it ought to be very "sparingly inflicted". They accordingly proposed to restrict it only to occasions of murder or "where the highest offence against the State has been committed". The labour of the Law Commission ultimately produced seven categories of offences warranting award of

capital punishment. Of these seven, death penalty was made mandatory only when a murder was committed by a person under the sentence of imprisonment for life. The six remaining situations in which the Code sanctions death sentence as an alternative to life imprisonment are (i) waging war against the government or attempting or abetting of such war (Section 121), (ii) abetment of mutiny committed by the officers of Defence Forces with mutiny being committed in consequence of such abetment (Section 132), (iii) giving or fabricating false evidence with intent to procure conviction of a person, of a capital offence, if an innocent person is thereby convicted and executed in consequence of such false evidence (Section 194), (iv) murder (Section 302), (v) abetment of suicide of a person under eighteen years of age, an insane person, delirious persons, idiot or intoxicated person (Section 305), and (vi) attempt to murder by a person under sentence of life imprisonment if as a result of such attempt hurt is caused (Section 307).

There are in addition to these seven categories, three situations in which liability to death penalty may arise constructively. This would arise under situations where any of the capital offences is committed under conditions of joint liability (Section 34 and 149), abetment (Sections 109 and 114) or conspiracy (Section 120 B).

The Indian Penal Code, 1860, thus marked a major normative advance by categorizing and narrowing the range of capital punishment. The subsequent and companion endeavours at codification—notably the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, and the Evidence Act, 1872—introduced procedures for the award of death sentence and for commutation and safeguards against testimonial and evidential compulsions and aberrations.

The position at law at present is that only the Court of Sessions (and High Courts acting in their original jurisdiction) can award death sentence. If the sentence has been awarded by the Court of Sessions, it requires confirmation by the High Court. There is scope for appeal to

the Supreme Court of India under Article 132, 134 and 136 of the Constitution. An appeal to the Supreme Court lies as a matter of right in those cases where the High Court has, upon a review of the Sessions Court's determination, reversed the acquittal and imposed death penalty or has enhanced the sentence to capital punishment. While in other situations the Supreme Court has a discretionary jurisdiction, it appears that there has developed over the years a convention that appeals against death sentence are not dismissed at the threshold without full consideration.

The Constitution confers through Articles 72 and 161 clemency powers on the President of India as well Governors of States. And the Supreme Court of India has at least on one occasion opined that the clemency powers should not be exercised arbitrarily or discriminatorily. Such exercise of powers may be adjudged to be a violation of the fundamental right of equality before the law guaranteed by Article 14 of the Constitution.⁶ There have been occasions when clemency powers have been exercised on mass scale for all death sentences. General clemency has been reported on the 2500th birth anniversaries of Lord Buddha and Lord Mahavira.⁷

It is clear that since independence the use of capital punishment as a measure of social control has been on the decline. We do not have complete data of death sentences awarded and carried out during the entire colonial period. But it is obvious that the incidence of sentence and execution was very high in this period. The magnitude of capital punishment in colonial India can be gauged from the fact that during successive decades of the period 1911 to 1940, 86, 95 and 81 per cent of capital offenders were executed respectively. During the period 1947-50, the percentage came down to 62, and the decade 1951-60 saw 31 per cent executions.⁸ The total number of persons sentenced to death during the period 1961 to 1970 was 6,672, of these 781 persons were refused commutation of their sentence. It is thus clear that independent India has followed

a more restrictive policy towards sentence of death and executions.

SENTENCING POLICY

The courts are basically vested with considerable sentencing discretion. But legislative text and context influence, to some extent, the patterns of judicial discretion. Thus, generally speaking, the Criminal Procedure Code required, for the period 1898 to 1955, courts and judges to state their reasons for *not* awarding death sentence for capital offences. Capital punishment for such offences was perceived to be a *rule* rather than an *exception*. Following the recommendation of the Law Commission of India in its thirty-fifth Report,⁹ this provision was altogether deleted. Courts were now free to award death sentence or life imprisonment in the light of each fact-situation. The Supreme Court took the view that this change made both the sentences normal punishments and ruled that courts have to exercise their sentencing discretion judiciously, cognizing all relevant considerations.

But the Code of Criminal Procedure Code 1973, recognized the principle that imprisonment for life was the *normal* punishment for capital offences (save Section 303 of the Penal Code which imposes a mandatory death sentence). The Code by Section 354 (c) underscored this principle by the mandatory requirement that courts record in writing their reasons for awarding the death sentence as an alternative to life imprisonment. Award of death sentence now calls for the highest degree of judicial rectitude. The 1973 shift in sentencing policy brings India closer to the aspirations of abolitionists, and testifies to the growing strength of community feeling that if the sentence is not abolished it should be used very sparingly. A further reinforcement to this sentiment was provided in 1980 when the Supreme Court, while up-holding the constitutional validity of section 302 of the Indian Penal Code, unequivocally ruled that death penalty should not be used save for the

"rarest of rare cases when the alternative option is unquestionably foreclosed",¹⁰

We lack comprehensive studies of sentencing process. But available studies of capital punishment suggest several strands of arbitrariness in sentencing behaviour.¹¹ Clearly, judicial practice fails to disclose any coherent guidelines either for the award of capital punishment or for enhancement of sentence. The same is true of the clemency powers, to which we turn later.

What are the principal sources of arbitrariness in judicial decisions on death sentence? First, it is clear that divergent attitudes and social philosophies of individual justices are inescapably involved. Statistics cogently demonstrate that some justices (especially in the Supreme Court) are readily and regularly inclined to sustain death sentences, others are similarly disinclined and the rest are eclectic, approaching the question case by case. No doubt, sentencing discretion is inherent in our legal system, and it may also be considered generally desirable. The present question, however, goes beyond the everyday sentencing discretion. It involves that kind of sentencing discretion which results in final annihilation of an individual life. Should such a sentence vary, like equity, with the Chancellor's foot?

Second, the possibility of such violation is aggravated by the practice of bench formation. Professor Blackshield has demonstrated quantitatively that most final appeals on capital punishment are heard by two judge benches. For the period 28 April 1972 to 3 March 1976, only eleven justices of the Supreme Court participated in ten per cent or more cases. Thus, if justices having a pro-capital punishment or having strong law and order attitudes happen to constitute these benches, the likelihood of affirmation is much greater than otherwise. For example, he demonstrates that "the preponderance from November 1972 to January 1973 of the benches comprising Justices Vaidalingam, Dua and Ahirswami may have been unfortunate for the appellants involved". The question, starkly

put, is this: Am I to hang because of the way in which the Chief Justice of India constitutes benches from time to time? Given the irrevocable nature of this punishment, and the contours of fundamental right to life, the answer that such judicial practices govern all sentencing is no answer at all to this question.

Third, when we look at cases in which the Supreme Court upheld the sentence or enhancement of the sentence we find the justices resorting in justification to a wide variety of factors which fail to reveal any coherent pattern at all. Dr Raizada¹² has classified cases upto 1976 in terms of actual categories used by the court to award or enhance the sentence. These are (i) "cold blooded murder"¹³, (ii) "deliberate" murder of "unarmed" and defenceless person¹⁴, (iii) "calculated and premeditated murder", (iv) "murder with firearms"¹⁵, (v) murder described variously as "brutal", "cold blooded", "deliberate", "unprovoked", "fatal", "gruesome", "wicked", "heinous" or "violent".¹⁶ (vi) "murder committed in nontraditional circumstances" like political murders or riots¹⁷, and (vii) "Cases of group liability".¹⁸

Fourth, the position as regards "mitigating factors" also shows the same incoherence. For example, on the question of vicarious liability, Dr Raizada concludes that "many convicts have been spared of capital punishment on sentence only because they were held liable under sections 34 or 149 etc., along with others who were not sentenced to death. Thus, in these cases of vicarious liability for the sake of parity the Courts preferred to resort to reduction of sentence, though the circumstances in many cases were not entirely different from those wherein the Courts allowed unequal sentences to stand".¹⁹ A second 'mitigating' factor is the young age of the offender. But this too has been quite arbitrarily applied by the Supreme Court.²⁰ In some cases, the Court have taken the view that youth is no ground for extenuation of sentence. But as Dr Raizada points out, there are cases in which both the Supreme Court and

the High Court have reduced the sentence "for no special reasons on record except the age of the appellant".²¹ The result in some cases is one of acute injustice. This is so because in some situations young offenders who have committed multiple murders get a reduction to life sentence whereas in others where "neither the loss of as many human lives, nor of higher valued property was involved, the accused were awarded death sentence". A third "mitigating" factor is that of delay in final sentencing. It is by now quite clear that there is no way of predicting the exact period of prolonged proceedings which may favour the appellant. In *"Raghubir Singh"* (Cri. L. 3 1974 S.C. 603) for example, 20 months were held to constitute delay entitling reduction in sentence, whereas, in many cases death sentences have been confirmed even when two or more years were taken in the final disposal of the appeal.²² It also seems to be the case of the accused who was being convicted and sentenced after his acquittal from the subordinate court.²³

Apart from the vagaries regarding delay in proceedings as a "mitigating" factor, there is another factor and a more fundamental one which makes the imposition of capital sentence more or less a kind of cruel judicial lottery. If my case is handled expeditiously by the prosecutor, defence lawyer, sessions court, high court and the Supreme Court, then this "mitigating" factor is not available to me for reduction to life sentence. If on the other hand, there has been the lack of despatch, "engineered" or "natural", then I may escape the gallows (subject of course to the judicial vagaries mentioned in the preceding paragraphs). In other words, the more efficient the proceedings, the more certain the death sentence, and *vice versa*.

There are two other categories, namely, "the mental condition of the accused" and "blameworthiness of the deceased" which too enhance the potential for arbitrariness in affirmation of death sentence by the Supreme Court.²⁴

All these factors singly and cumulatively

indicate not merely that there is *an enormous potential* of arbitrary award of death penalty by the High Courts and the Supreme Court but that *in fact death sentences have been awarded arbitrarily*. Judges have not found it possible to evolve any set of criteria or guidelines for the award and affirmation of death sentence, some of them have not even tried to make such an effort asserting, rather boldly, that it is neither necessary nor justifiable!

The High Courts are free to decide what law the Supreme Court has declared in cases coming before it or indeed to decide whether the Court has declared any law at all. This means in the area of death sentence that High Courts may from time to time reduce death sentence on their understanding of guidelines which the Supreme Court prescribes. Unless there is an appeal by the State for enhancement of the sentence, the reduced sentences by the High Courts will operate, in other words, excepting cases where appeals for enhancement by the State or acquittal by the accused are involved, the accused may be governed by the law declared by the High Court from case to case. In practical terms, this means that subjectivism in the award of death sentence is further aggravated. For example, as between A whose death sentence is confirmed by the High Court, and B whose sentence is reduced to life imprisonment by the High Court, A is more exposed to sentencing vagaries than B. And A might not have been exposed to these had there been any detailed codes of sentencing guidelines binding the High Courts in the matter of awarding death sentence.

EXERCISE OF CLEMENCY POWERS

A similar arbitrariness affects the exercise of clemency powers by the President of India and Governors. Although exact figures of Presidential clemencies are not available, some aspects are clear. The President is not bound to make public his reasons for decision. Secondly, the reasons for not granting or granting pardon may, despite the Constitution, not be his own: that is, he might be influenced totally by the notings on the files made by the Home

Ministry or the Secretariat. That means that the President may not really be applying his mind. Thirdly, we have no ways of knowing what criteria the advisers to the President follow in annotating clemency papers, and in this context how much attention do they pay to the observations of the Supreme Court, both generally and in the fact situation of the instant case. On the whole, the President and his advisers are not bound to follow any procedures in considering clemency petitions, the President's decisions are non-speaking, they cannot be reviewed either on any known principles of administrative justice, so that there exists not merely unbridled discretion in arriving at the actual decisions but also unreviewability. The clemency powers are open to constitutional challenge, especially after "*Maneka Gandhi*"²⁵ decision, on the ground that they violate Article 21, rights to life. Clearly, unless some reasonable procedure is prescribed for the exercise of the power to pardon, it must follow that the exercises of power as well as even the existence of the power are liable to be constitutionally reviewed. If such wide powers are to be sustained, the principles of natural justice should apply to their exercise.

Such data as are available indicate cause for concern as to the existing patterns for the exercise of clemency powers. The commutation pattern under Presidential discretion is as follows:

Year	Percentage of commutation
1951	27.76
1957-62	28.51
1968-72	47.12
1969-74	47.23

The total number of persons sentenced to death for the period 1961-70 was 6,672. As against this, only 787 were refused commutation. Yearwise, the breakup is as follows:²⁶

Year	Persons sentenced to death	Persons refused commutation
1961	721	170
1962	821	93
1963	761	121
1964	718	112
1965	729	85
1966	617	39
1967	628	69
1968	565	85
1969	540	0
1970	572	13

The pattern of commutation suggests, overall, that only about 48 per cent commutations are given. On the other hand, when we look at the table of yearwise information, we find a different picture. The yearly average of commutation works out to roughly about 12 per cent. It is most noteworthy that for the years 1969 and 1970 there has been a marked decline in the number of executions. The relatively low figures for 1966 are also significant. In fact, the variation from year to year becomes striking when we take leave of cold statistics and realize the fact that one is talking about the life and death of a person. If a person's clemency petition occurred in the years 1962, 1965, 1966, 1967 and 1968 he had a better chance of survival and the best possible chance in the years 1969 and 1970. Is this position just? Does it have any bearing on the attainment of any penological or social objectives? Does it have any specific humanitarian content? Or is it all a matter of moods, attitudes, available time for the President and his advisers in the government?

THE DEBATE ON DEATH SENTENCE

The vagaries in sentencing policy have featured, though not pre-eminently, in the debate concerning death sentence in India. The Law Commission of India in its thirty-fifth Report²⁷ and the Supreme Court of India in its 1972 and 1980 decisions reviewed carefully arguments against the retention of death penalty. Both the Commission and the Court were examining the question of retention of

capital punishment, although the issues were naturally formulated differently before them. The Commission was to examine the wisdom of retaining Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code; the Court was asked to use its judicial power to declare the section as invalid being violating of the right to equality before the law (Article 14) to life and liberty as guaranteed by Article 21 as interpreted by the "*Maneka Gandhi*" decision.²⁸ But the ultimate issues were the same. So were the ultimate answers. The Supreme Court agreed in spirit, if not in words, with the conclusion of the Commission (which it also quoted) that:

"Having regard, to the conditions of India, the variety of social bringing of its inhabitants, to the disparity in the level of morality and education in the country, to the vastness of its population and to the paramount need for maintaining law and order in the country at the present juncture, India cannot risk experiment of the abolition of capital punishment."²⁹

The Supreme Court recognised the argument that death penalty is irreversible, the judicial process is fallible, and that therefore innocent persons may often or at times suffer this penalty. But the Court opined that this possibility only argues for the "reform of judicial system and sentencing procedure".³⁰ And it held that the present legal provisions, surveyed earlier, "almost eliminate the chances of an innocent person being convicted and executed for a capital offence". The abolitionist argument is, of course, about the caveat; the fact that such prospects are "almost eliminated" means that they are not totally eliminated. And so long as such total elimination is felt to be impossible in human decision-making, the abolitionist arguments stand further reinforced.

The second abolitionist argument which found no favour with the Court was that death penalty serves no penological purpose. This argument entailed three separate propositions. First, it is argued that death penalty has no proven deterrent effect. Second, it is maintained that retribution or vengeance is no

longer an accepted end of punishment and can therefore no longer supply the justification for retention of death sentence. Third, death penalty nullifies the most accepted aim of punishment, namely, reformation and rehabilitation of offenders. The Court did not accept any of these propositions. Relying eclectically on varied materials—judicial decisions, legislative experiments at abolition of the sentence for murder, empirical sociological studies of the impact of abolition on the rate of murder, and opinions of law reformers—the majority of the Court found that the "very fact that persons of reason, learning and light are deeply divided in their opinions on the issue", negatives the argument that death penalty is "totally devoid of reason and purpose".³¹ The Court recognized that social scientific studies of the deterrent value of death penalty are "inconclusive" for the reason of the "inconstancy of social conditions". While this is true, the Court obviously did not have before it literature which testifies pre-eminently that retention of death penalty has no causal relevance to the incidence of murder. Indeed, it inclined to the view that death sentence was the "last horrifying deterrent" for the "toughs of the underworld" and "anti-social hoodlums" and that it was the "most formidable safeguard against terrorism".³² But, "there is no shred of evidence that the threat of execution is a more effective deterrent" than that of "life imprisonment which usually takes its place".³³

The majority also negated the argument that death sentence was arbitrary, cruel or degrading punishment. Indeed, it thought that the makers of the Constitution by explicitly recognizing the Indian Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure (Entries I and II in List III of the Seventh Schedule), endowing the High Court and Supreme Court with special powers of confirmation and review, and by providing power to pardon both to the President and the Governors, clearly recognized death sentence for murder as a "reasonable" punishment. Nor, did the Constitution-makers consider execution by

hanging as either degrading or cruel Harmonious interpretation of the Constitution did not permit elevation of the rights in Article 21 to a higher "constitutional postulate" As to sources and patterns of judicial arbitrariness in sentencing, described here in some detail earlier, the Court satisfied itself by the recognition of the "impossibility" of prescription of standards for sentencing. It observed that, "the impossibility of laying down standards is at the very core of the criminal law as it is administered in India which invest the judges with a very wide discretion in the matter of fixing the degree of punishment",³⁴ Justice Bhagwati dissented. He was of the view that section 302 was violative of Articles 14 and 21, insofar as it provided death sentence as an alternative punishment, "since it does not provide any legislative guidelines as to when life should be permitted to be extinguished by imposition of death sentence". The full opinion giving reasons for this dissent is as yet unavailable but abolitionist positions would no doubt find considerable support from it.

CONCLUSION

In India, thus, all attempts to eliminate death sentence have so far failed. But the failure has not been complete, it has been marked by an anxious dialogue among people and policy-makers concerning its nature, scope and impact. It appears that both the award of the sentence and actual executions are on the decline, especially when compared with the 1911-1950 period. Indeed the decline is as sharp as it is remarkable. But at the same time the fact that in the last decade 6,672 people were awarded death sentence, and that 781 of these were refused commutation, gives us roughly an average of over 600 awards and over 70 executions per year.

At the same time, India has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1979. Article 6 of this Covenant recognizes "the inherent right to life" of "every human being" and requires legal protection of this right; "no-one shall be

arbitrarily deprived of his life". For countries which have not abolished capital punishment, Article 6 provides a code of conduct. Sentence of death is to be prescribed only for "most serious crimes" and it has to be "carried out pursuant to a final judgement rendered by a competent court". Retrospective liability of death sentence is prohibited, nor are parties to the covenant allowed "deprivation of life" which constitutes "the crime of genocide" as defined in the convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Rights to seek pardon, amnesty or commutation are to be guaranteed to all. Persons below 18 years of age and pregnant women are under no circumstances to be executed. Of course, the Indian law fulfills these requirements. But clause (6) of Article 6 stipulates the additional obligation: "Nothing in this article shall be invoked to delay or prevent the abolition of capital punishment by a State party to the present Covenant". This is a treaty obligation, which read with Article 51 of the Indian Constitution, enjoins all branches of the Indian State, including the judiciary, to take steps towards "eventual abolition" of death sentence. The General Assembly of the United Nations in its Resolution 2857 (XXVI) of 29 December 1971 also affirmed

"In order to guarantee fully the right to life, provided for in article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the main objective to be pursued is that of progressively restricting the number of offences for which capital punishment may be imposed, with a view to the desirability of abolishing this punishment in all countries".

These sentiments need translation in action. India as a major developing country, with a proud record of democratic endeavour towards protection of human rights for her people, is poised to take an unique initiative in abolishing death penalty. Such an initiative would undoubtedly have a global impact in the pursuit towards a just and humane social order.

UPENDRA BAXI

NOTES

- 1 *Capital Punishment*, U N document A/CONF 87/9, 23 June 1980, working paper prepared by the Secretariat for the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders, Caracas, Venezuela
- 2 Spain abolished death penalty in 1932, restored it for certain crimes in 1934-1938 and abolished it in 1978. Argentina, U S S R, and Sri Lanka were at one time abolitionist States
- 3 U K Jadhav, *Is Capital Punishment Necessary?*, Anand Publications, Bombay, 1973
- 4 U N Ghosal, *A History of Political Ideas*, Oxford University Press, 1959. P N Sen, *Hindu Jurisprudence*, Tagore Law Lectures, University of Calcutta, 1918. J Jolly, *Hindu Law and Customs*, 1928. I Salatore, *Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions*, Agra Publishing House, 1963. J Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, 1962. V Hussain, *Administration of Justice During the Muslim Rule in India*, University of Calcutta, 1934. Law Commission of India, *Thirty-fifth Report Capital Punishment*, Government of India, Ministry of Law, New Delhi, 1967, pp 190-234
- 5 M P Jain, *Indian Legal History* (2nd edn), M N Tnpathi, Bombay, 1966
- 6 "*G Krishna Goud V State*", Supreme Court Cases, 1976, p 157
- 7 *Death Penalty*, Amnesty International Report, 1979-80
- 8 K S Chhabra, *Quantum of Punishment in Criminal Law*, Punjab University Press, 1970
- 9 Law Commission of India, *Thirty-Fifth Report Capital Punishment*, Government of India, Ministry of Law, New Delhi, 1967
- 10 "*Bachan Singh V State of Punjab*", Supreme Court Cases, 1980
- 11 A R Black shield, "Capital Punishment in India", *Indian Law Institute*, 21, 1979, p 137. B B Pande, "Face to Face with Death Sentence: Supreme Court's Legal and Constitutional Dilemmas", *Supreme Court Cases*, 4, 1979, p 39. R K Razada, *Trends in Sentencing: A Study of Important Penal Statutes and Judicial Pronouncements of the High Courts and the Supreme Court, 1950-1975*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Rajasthan, 1977
- 12 R K Razada, *op cit*
- 13 "*Imam Ali V State of Assam*", *Criminal Law Journal*, Supreme Court, 1969, p 13
- 14 "*A Moiden V State of Kerala*", *Criminal Law Journal* 1, Supreme Court, 1973, p 671
- 15 In this category both High Courts and the Supreme Court have affirmed the sentence without any comment in a large number of cases. Dr Razada, upon a study of these cases, maintains that the awarding of death sentence on the criteria that fire arms were used in the commission of the crime has not been consistent
- 16 These labels indicate the intensity of judicial reaction to murders. But different judges will react differently to these situations. The manner of commission of murder rather than the context and circumstances involved, will assume salience under these categories.
- 17 In "*R D Bhagarew v State of Maharashtra*", *Criminal Law Journal*, Supreme Court, 1973, p 680, involving murder in course of communal riots, Justice Dua used "secularism", "national solidarity" and "traditional social order" (its preservation of law and apt use of sentencing discretion) as grounds of affirming death sentences. In some cases political feelings and motivation have been regarded as irrelevant to sentencing discretion, whereas in the *Apren* case the Supreme Court reduced the sentence to life imprisonment on the ground of "undue" political provocation, and the accused being "misguided by political intolerance and the cult of violence"
- 18 In a large number of cases, according to Dr Razada (*op cit*, p 123) there is no uniformity, rather no established criteria for awarding death sentence to the accused who himself did not give the fatal blow though (he) was directly involved in the commission of murder with the other assailants. Even the sane advice of Justice Vivian Bose that death sentence should not be awarded except for unusual reasons when appellate judges who agree on the question of guilt differ on that of sentence has been disregarded (Compare Justice Bose's remarks in *Pandurang V State of Hyderabad*", *A I R Supreme Court* 1955, p 216, *contra* Justice Hidayatullah's observation in "*Babu v State of U P*" in *Criminal Law Journal*, Supreme Court, 1965, p 539
- 19 R K Razada, *op cit*, p 13
- 20 Compare, e.g. "*State of U P v Suman Dass*", *Criminal Law Journal*, Supreme Court, 1972, p 489 and "*Brijesh Kumar v State*", *Criminal Law Journal*, Allahabad, 1958, p 842, with "*Bhagwan Swarup v State of U P*", *Criminal Law Journal*, Supreme Court 1971, p 413
- 21 R K Razada, *op cit*, p 147
- 22 For an illustrative list see *ibid*, p 202
- 23 *Ibid*, p 151,
- 24 *Ibid*, pp 152-161
- 25 "*Maneka Gandhi v Union of India*", *I Supreme Court Cases*, 1978
- 26 Data derived from July 1974 issue of *Journal of Social Defence* excerpted in J P S Sirohi, *Criminology and Criminal Administration*, Allahabad Law Agency, 1980, p 190

- 27 Law Commission of India, *op cit*
- 28 "*Maneka Gandhi v Union, of India*", 1 *Supreme Court Cases*, 1978, p 248 This decision now requires that the procedure prescribed by the law depriving a person of one's right to life and personal liberty should be fair and just, and not arbitrary or repressive See for an analysis, U Baxi, *The Indian Supreme Court and Politics*, Eastern Book Co , Lucknow, 1980, pp 151-167
- 29 Law Commission of India, *op cit*, p 712
- 30 "*Bacchan Singh v State of Punjab*" 2 *Supreme Court Cases*, 1980, p 684, 734
- 31 See also "*Rajendra Prasad v State of U P*", 3 *Supreme Court Cases*, 1979, p 646 and "*Bishnu Singh Deo Shaw v State of West Bengal*", 3 *Supreme Court Cases*, 1979, p 714, Justice Chunnappa Reddy sharply highlighted the inequality in the incidence of death sentence He said "the burden of capital punishment falls more frequently upon the ignorant, the impoverished and the underprivileged"
- 32 "*Bacchan Singh v State of Punjab*", *op cit* , p 729
- 33 Radzinowicz and J King, *Growth of Crime The International Experience*, Pelican, 1979
- 34 "*Bacchan Singh v State of Punjab*", *op cit* , p 737

CASEWORK

The practice of casework is a humanistic attempt for helping people who have difficulty in coping with the problems of daily living It is one of the direct methods of social work which uses the case-by-case approach for dealing with individuals or families as regards their problems of social functioning

Though casework as a mode of helping people on the basis of a person-to-person relationship was present in every society from ancient times, the professional method of casework originated in U S A in the second decade of this century One of the earliest organised efforts in U.S.A to help the poor was the establishment of the American Charity

'Organization Society in 1877 on the pattern of the Charity Organization of London which was started seven years earlier One of the aims of the society was to find out ways and means of helping the poor and needy and thus to organise individualised services geared to this purpose The society used volunteers, who were called friendly visitors, to visit the homes of the poor for purposes of assessing their need, for rendering material assistance and for giving them guidance and advice The friendly visitors were subsequently supplemented by 'paid agents' These paid helpers gradually developed systematic procedures in performing their tasks They collected data about the needy individuals and families, and helped them after assessing their need They also maintained records in which they kept all the information including personal data, as well as the type of help rendered. It was out of the practice of these early workers that casework developed gradually to a professional method in subsequent years Their collective experience of knowing the poor families and their problems and the concurrent studies of poverty by social scientists broadened the understanding of human behaviour There was the growing recognition that there were forces within the individual and forces external to him which influenced his behaviour and the nature of his existence in society In course of time the terms 'paid agents' and 'the poor' were supplanted by caseworkers and clients respectively in the terminology of the help giving organisation and the office of the organisation came to be known as the agency

Mary Richmond's book,¹ *Social Diagnosis*, which was published in 1917 may be considered as the first book in casework It set forth a methodology of helping clients through systematic ways of assessing their problems and handling them Besides, the book introduced the principle of individualisation and also acknowledged the client's right of self-determination The first training programme for caseworkers was in the form of summer courses Then the need for more substantial training was found necessary and schools of

social work, attached to agencies, came into existence. When these schools attained a certain standing in the community, they were recognized as professional schools under the administrative authority of universities.

Freudian psychology which emerged in the 1920s had a strong impact on casework. The new psychoanalytical knowledge pertaining to human behaviour was eagerly absorbed by caseworkers which was found useful in understanding clients and their problems. During this period of development caseworkers focussed their attention on psychic forces within the individual. During the economic depression of the 1930s casework had to consider the economic factors which were causing distress to clients. There was also the realisation that economic distress could lead to emotional distress and breakdown. One major outcome of the depression was the establishment of governmental public assistance programmes. It relieved the voluntary agencies from the tasks of providing economic help which enabled the caseworkers to devote more time in dealing with clients' interpersonal problems.

During the 1940s, caseworkers were exposed to the formulations on ego psychology based on the observations of human beings as regards their differential coping and adapting abilities in times of stress. The new studies on human behaviour brought to light the potentialities of the human personality for healthy adaptation to life's stresses. During the next two decades, some casework theoreticians began to examine sociological concepts like social role, social system, social class, etc., with reference to their applicability to casework situations. The result was the shifting of the focus from the self of the individual to his continuous interactions with his significant others in social settings.²

American casework did influence the use of casework in India as the first professional social workers who did casework in the Indian setting were trained in the American schools of social work. Casework was one of the courses taught when the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work, currently known as the

Tata Institute of Social Sciences, was started in Bombay in 1936, and it became a method of practice in helping people with their problems of social functioning. Some social welfare agencies employed caseworkers particularly with the purpose of helping their clients in a one-to-one relationship. Currently, the so-called caseworkers attached to some welfare services are not trained social workers, and those professionally trained social workers who use the method of casework considerably in their work are not given the designation of caseworkers as they are likely to use other methods as well.

CAUSES OF HUMAN PROBLEMS

Problems of social functioning cause distress to the individuals who come voluntarily or involuntarily to a social work agency for help. What is important to note here is that these individuals are not to be considered as one of a mass of people or a unit of a category, but as unique persons. Casework method in social work is an indication of the high value placed on the individual by the profession.

Those people who seek social work help for their problems of living do so because their normal coping methods are not effective in dealing with the particular problems. There are reasons why individuals find their normal coping patterns ineffective in the face of some problems. These reasons may be broadly divided into five categories³

(1) *Lack of material resources.* Social work agencies do not have financial resources to give assistance to people who seek material help. But, when lack of money makes it difficult for an individual to deal with a particular situation effectively, it is likely that he can obtain financial help through the services of a caseworker, depending upon the nature of the situation and the policy of the agency. For example, it is possible for an amputee who is poor and who is a patient in a general hospital to get monetary help through the social work department of the hospital for buying artificial limbs.

(2) *Misconceptions about situations and relationships and lack of appropriate information* Wrong notions about things prevent people from handling difficult situations effectively. Many people have superstitious beliefs about diseases which prevent them from taking prompt medical treatment which can cure the disease. For example, if a man believes that his child's epileptic fits are caused by the possession of a devil, he is likely to try remedies which will worsen the condition. Sometimes it is ignorance of existing services and resources which delays action. Help is required to correct distorted perceptions and for obtaining essential information.

(3) *Illness or health related handicaps* Physical and mental illness and health related handicaps of various types make people helpless or irrational in the face of difficulties. For instance, when in a family the father is ill, the mother will have to bear extra burden and face problems alone for which she may require outside help. The patient and his family may need help to accept the illness of the former and to make realistic plans for the present and future.

(4) *Emotional distress resulting from stressful situations.* In certain situations strong feelings are aroused which make a person incapable of acting sensibly. For instance, when a father comes to know of his adolescent son's delinquent activities he may feel so upset and ashamed that he may want to throw the boy out of the house and to sever all his connections with him. In such situations the emotionally upset person needs someone to whom he can verbalise his feelings freely. Verbalisation will reduce the need to act out irrationally and set the mind clear for objective thinking.

(5) *Personality features or deficiencies* Defective features of one's personality not only create problematic situations for oneself and others but also make one incapable of solving problems of life. If a little girl is brought up by her mother in the strong belief that her father

who deserted the family was a bad man and that all men are likewise bad, it is probable that the girl will have a difficult relationship with her husband when she later marries. The generalised wrong idea may get deeply implanted in the daughter's personality during childhood and she may not be even aware of it as she grows into adulthood. There are innumerable problems of this type effecting human relationships, caused by unhealthy attitudes and reactions which are deeply embedded in the personality. Here, the remedy lies in helping the persons concerned to develop insight about their own reactions and learn to act consciously and appropriately rather than react automatically to situations.

PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES OF CASEWORK

The foundation of the practice of casework is a conceptual framework consisting of certain values or philosophical assumptions. The most basic value is that of the worth and dignity of every human being. The next is the commitment to the goal of human betterment, in terms of both material and emotional wellbeing. Then, there is the value related to the development of human potential to the highest level possible. Since each individual is considered to be important, there is the corollary of the need for every person to participate fully in the direction of his own life. These value orientations are the result of philosophic thought over years of human existence and are to be differentiated from scientific theories which can be tested and proved. Nevertheless, belief in these values is a necessary pre-requisite in order that casework may be effective. There is another set of commitments emerging from these philosophical assumptions and the idea of individualised help. They are concepts of acceptance, non-condemning attitudes, confidentiality and controlled emotional involvement. Though these concepts originally developed from the values mentioned earlier, they were reinforced later by the experience of social workers with the result that they

subsequently became casework principles or rules of action. Closely linked with these values and principles is the postulate that human behaviour can change. Human history indicates that sages, philosophers, priests and teachers, since times immemorial, had tried to explain human behaviour and to change it. They were only partially successful. It will be presumptuous to think that by application of behavioural sciences one can change human behaviour easily. One has to be rather modest as regards one's expectations.

In this context, it is pertinent to think of the qualities desirable in a caseworker who functions as the change agent. The social worker must be a person who is capable of changing himself and his attitudes to be in keeping with the values and principles of casework. He must be open to new ideas and develop the capacity for self-awareness. Self-awareness is a never ending process, and the ability for self-awareness is an essential quality in order that the social worker may be able to perceive his own biases and shed them to be able to render effective casework service to clients. Related to the belief in the basic assumptions in casework is the necessity for the social caseworker to cultivate appropriate attitudes and qualities necessary for social work.

Besides the values and principles, the body of knowledge in casework consists of scientific concepts, tools and techniques for action. Many of the concepts of casework have been borrowed from the social and behavioural sciences. Some of these important concepts are the influence of environment on the individual's life experience, the importance of the basic physical and emotional needs, consequences of the non-fulfilment of these needs, the purposefulness of behaviour and the impact of social and cultural factors on human lives.

The techniques and tools of casework have developed from practical experience and from the knowledge derived from behavioural sciences. Interviewing is an important tool in casework, and in interviewing, effective

listening becomes an essential component. Many procedures are brought into play in the person-to-person contact between the caseworker and the client. Acceptance of feelings, empathy, encouragement for expression of feelings, assurance, clarification of ideas and situations, and giving of advice and information are some of the techniques used in casework. These techniques of communication may sound to be rather commonplace, but they are called techniques for the specific reason that they have to be applied consciously and deliberately by the social worker for certain objectives. For example, empathising as a technique is to be differentiated from the quality of sympathy. A person's distress may evoke feelings of sympathy in an observer without any mental effort on the part of the latter. On the other hand, an imaginative effort and an awareness of one's own feelings are necessary for the exercise of empathy. A social worker cannot always rely on his own feelings of sympathy to be a competent professional helper. Even in situations where sympathy is not evoked, the social worker has to use empathy to be of help to the client. Empathising and related techniques help towards developing a one-to-one relationship. In a positive relationship, marked by an emotionally non-threatening atmosphere, the client feels accepted despite his shortcomings and, as a result, the inner pressure to defend himself is considerably reduced. In such an emotional atmosphere the client is inclined to look at himself, at others and at situations more objectively. An objective perception, separated from subjective feelings, is the first step towards change of behaviour.

Besides these techniques of communication, there is another procedure, that of environmental change. The caseworker makes efforts to deal with the client's environmental difficulties by securing for him material resources. Social work agencies do not have the financial resources to provide economic assistance to clients, but the social worker, with his knowledge of the larger community, is

producing results. Professional skill is required on the part of the caseworker to assess every client and to select a suitable procedure based on empirical evidence. The core of eclecticism is that it aims at choosing a procedure suitable for the client rather than fitting the client to a procedure in hand. The choice of a particular conceptual stance is the end product of an intellectual and emotional process and it is likely to be influenced by the particular personality make up of the caseworker.⁶

An eclectic approach does make heavy demands on the caseworker in that he needs to have substantial knowledge and practical skills. He should analyse and evaluate. Most importantly, he should have the tolerance and flexibility to have his own attitudes altered to be willing to try new procedures. All these would imply that casework practitioners should involve themselves in an ongoing process of education. Refresher courses, seminars, workshops and such other programmes are methods for providing continuing education to social workers.

THEORY BUILDING IN CASEWORK

A listing of the different approaches to theory building in social work presented by Turner in one of his books is relevant here with reference to theory building in casework.⁷ The approaches are (i) Some of the earlier books on casework were the results of caseworkers' efforts to formulate and explain the values, axioms, attitudes and techniques of practice. This is referred to as the pre-theory approach. (ii) Some caseworkers have based their written work on some specific theory which they have accepted. There have been some casework books written on the framework of psychodynamic theory, some others on functional theory and at least one book each on cognitive theory and role theory. (iii) Some authors have used practice base and have presented concepts in their own thinking. G B Banerjee, one of the pioneers of professional social work in India, has contributed considerably to Indian social work through her

teaching and writing. In her written work, she has tried to integrate relevant concepts from Indian philosophy with casework.⁸ (iv) A fourth method has been to compile all theories together and to make comparison between theories. (v) There are a few who have built up theory based on research findings. Though this is an important and essential method, this has been used infrequently. Therefore, this mode has to be developed and fostered to strengthen the theoretical base of casework.

CASEWORK PRACTICE IN INDIA

Casework is practised in many settings in India, but only in settings confined to urban areas. Social work agencies which provide casework services to help people in distress are social service departments of hospitals and clinics, family welfare service centres, residential institutions for children and adults, social service departments of schools, child guidance clinics, community centres, correctional institutions and mental health centres.

In order to understand the case situations of Indian clients, it is useful to refer to the classification of factors (a classification which has been mentioned earlier) which lie beyond people's abilities for problem solving. Most of the casework clientele belong to the lower socio-economic levels. They bring problems which fall within the five-factor range, and generally they bring more than one problem. Most have the common difficulty, namely, lack of material resources, coupled with other predicaments. Caseworkers are often overwhelmed by the prevalence of large scale poverty among their clientele. Never during the brief span of the history of casework have caseworkers claimed that they had remedies for large scale poverty and economic distress. While working with a poor person what the caseworker can offer is a humane and understanding relationship and advocacy on his behalf to get the necessary materials for the fulfilment of his basic needs. Caseworkers in cities, particularly in Bombay, do succeed in

pooling material resources on behalf of individual clients. But when there are many poverty stricken clients, the caseworker's success in finding economic resources diminishes. There is a point of view, therefore, that all social work efforts should be geared to system-change rather than to individuals. Such a stance cannot be accepted by the caseworker whose first commitment is to the individual. Caseworkers also deal with situations other than those created by economic needs. Furthermore, efforts by social workers alone cannot bring about changes within the social, political and economic structures of the Indian society. Social workers, nevertheless, have a responsibility as regards the advocacy role and to support the argument and social action in favour of system-change.

Indian casework needs to develop indigenous literature. Caseworkers have developed strategies of intervention suited to Indian clientele. If they can abstract these from practice situations, conceptualise and build postulates around them, it will have considerable educational and practice value. Some of the approaches to theory development which were discussed in this article can be used by caseworkers for developing concepts. An eclectic approach provides ample scope for practice-based research. The introduction of doctoral programmes in social work in Indian universities is a step which will also help in building up indigenous literature.

Casework which is the oldest method in professional social work has been the centre of many controversies. The main controversy has been around the question whether it is an effective way of dealing with human problems. There have been arguments for and against casework, without arriving at any conclusion. Casework is not the method suitable for all human problems, but for certain problems no better method is available. Until a better and more effective way is evolved, this method, embodying a personalized service, is going to stay.

G MATHEW

NOTES

- 1 M. Richmond, *Social Diagnosis*, Russel Sage Foundation, New York, 1917
- 2 The short history of American Casework presented here is based on an article by H H Perlman. H H Perlman, "Social Casework" in H K Lurie (ed), *Encyclopaedia of Social Work*, National Association of Social Workers, New York, 1965, pp. 704-714
- 3 H.H Perlman, *Social Casework A Problem-solving Process*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1957, pp 55-57
- 4 J Fischer, *Effective Casework Practice, an eclectic approach*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1978, pp 17-24
- 5 *Ibid*, pp 52-58
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CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HEALTH SCHEME

The Central Government Health Scheme was introduced in the Union Territory of Delhi on 1 July 1954 as a contributory health service to prepare the ground for a National Health Service. It was intended to demonstrate the feasibility of a comprehensive medical care programme on a contributory basis in which both the employer as well as the employee contribute. The main objectives of the scheme are: (i) to provide comprehensive medical care to Central government employees, (ii) to do away with the cumbersome and expensive system of reimbursement of medical expenses under the Civil Services (Medical Attendance)

Rules, and (iii) to work as a pilot project for the National Health Service

Compulsory monthly contribution on a graded scale is deducted from the salary of all Central government servants residing in the areas covered by the scheme, partly to meet the cost of the scheme and partly to inculcate an idea of partnership in this social security scheme. The rate of monthly contribution varies from 50 p for a monthly salary upto Rs 199; 75 p for a monthly salary between Rs 199 and Rs 330, Rs 1 50 for a monthly salary between Rs 330 to Rs 460, to Rs 12 for monthly salary of Rs 2,250 and above

GROWTH

Over the years the utility and popularity of the scheme has been established and its operation extended to other cities. The scheme was introduced in Bombay in 1963, Allahabad in 1969, Meerut in 1971, Kanpur and Calcutta in 1972, Nagpur in 1973, Madras in 1975, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Patna in 1976, Pune and Jaipur in 1978, and Ahmedabad and Lucknow in 1979. In these places, arrangements for hospitalisation and specialist consultation facilities have been made with State government hospitals and recognised private hospitals. In addition to Central government employees, the scheme has been extended to a number of Corporations, semi-government organisations, Jawahar Lal Nehru University and Delhi police personnel. The scheme has also been extended to Members of Parliament to whom medical facilities are provided as applicable to Category 'A' Officers of the Central Government. Members of the general public in 14 selected areas of Delhi where government servants predominantly reside and where private practitioners do not settle down due to limited scope of private practice have also been covered. The rate of contribution for this category of beneficiaries is higher than that for Central government employees. The amount charged is the actual expenditure per family incurred by the CGHS, namely, Rs 300 per annum. The scheme has

also been extended to former Members of Parliament, former Governors, former Vice-Presidents and retired judges of the High Courts. Pensioners are required to pay CGHS contribution on their pension or last pay drawn at rates applicable to serving government servants drawing similar pay. With a modest beginning of 16 Allopathic dispensaries in 1954 serving about 53,000 families in Delhi, the coverage has expanded considerably over the years. On 31 March 1979 the scheme covered 4.7 lakh families through 147 Allopathic dispensaries, 19 Hemeo Units, 20 Ayurvedic Units, 2 Unani dispensaries, one Yoga Centre and 14 Dental Units spread over the country. The total expenditure on CGHS has increased from Rs 7.11 crores in 1975-76 to Rs 12.05 crores in 1979-80.

FACILITIES PROVIDED UNDER THE SCHEME

Out-patient services to employees and their families are provided through static and mobile dispensaries in Allopathic, Ayurvedic, Homeopathic and Unani systems of medicine. In addition, the facility of attendance by doctors at the residence of the beneficiary in case of emergency and serious illness is also provided. Routine pathological tests are done in laboratories attached to CGHS dispensaries. Arrangements exist for providing round the clock emergency services through functioning dispensaries. For this purpose, one or more dispensaries are grouped together. Specialist services through visits of specialists attached to hospitals are provided in most of the dispensaries. Medicines prescribed by Medical Officers and Specialists are supplied by the dispensaries. For this purpose a Central Government Medical Store has been set up.

In-patient services in recognised hospitals are provided free of charge. Patients are provided beds according to their entitlement. Beneficiaries in the salary group upto Rs 750 per month are provided beds in general wards and those drawing salary above Rs 750 per month are entitled to nursing home facilities. All types of diagnostic facilities, including

X-Ray, E C.G, E E C I etc., are provided by hospitals on requisition by the Medical Officers. For certain diseases for which facilities are not available in one station, patients are referred to outside hospitals as, for instance, for cancer treatment to the Tata Memorial Hospital, and for neuro-surgery and cardiac and cardiothoracic surgery to the Christian Medical College, Vellore. Travelling expenses for the patient and the attendant are admissible in the case of tuberculosis and mental disorders. Patients are allowed admission in certain recognised tuberculosis and mental hospitals all over India. The CGHS beneficiaries get free treatment at these hospitals. They have, however, to pay for diet charges according to pay ceiling.

All CGHS dispensaries provide ante-natal and post-natal services, and family welfare planning services. Free distribution of contraceptives, I U D insertion and advice on family planning is given. Immunisation services for pre-school and school-going children are also provided.

In Delhi an Ayurvedic Hospital has been established for CGHS beneficiaries.

Maternity services are provided through recognised maternity centres, and a CGHS Maternity and Gynaecology Hospital. Two maternity centres provide for medical termination of pregnancy and female sterilisation services.

Health check-up facilities for Central government servants are provided through a number of first-aid posts in Delhi. One Medical Examination Centre for Members of Parliament is functioning in Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi, where X-Ray, laboratory, E C G and physiotherapy services are provided. As recommended by the Third Pay Commission, compulsory health check-up of all Central government employees is proposed to be provided through full-fledged polyclinics which are to be set up in a phased manner.

It will thus be seen that comprehensive medical care, including maternity and child health services, is given by the government to

its employees through the agency of CGHS.

Progress towards the original goal of introducing a National Health Insurance Scheme throughout the country has been steady though not spectacular. The main difficulties have been lack of adequate funds, non-availability of land and accommodation for construction of hospitals and dispensaries, and shortage of medical and para-medical staff. Although there are three Centrally administered hospitals in Delhi, in other cities it has not been possible to construct hospitals due to certain constraints. One of the problems faced in the expansion of the scheme is that the State Governments and hospital authorities sometimes find it difficult to conform to the procedure laid down for hospitalisation and specialist services to the CGHS beneficiaries where this is different from that followed in respect of other patients. There is a continuously increasing demand to bring more and more organisations and areas under the coverage of the CGHS. Health schemes on somewhat similar lines are run by Employees State Insurance Corporation, Coal Mines Labour Welfare Organisation, Port Health Organisation, large industrial units like steel plants, State government corporations and local bodies. It would be desirable to progressively cover the whole country by medical care on the pattern of CGHS dispensaries.

For achieving the goal of having a national health service on the pattern of U K, several alternatives can be considered—whether medical care is to be provided to the entire population through CGHS dispensaries, or there should be an amalgamation of different types of health care schemes on the lines of the National Health Service in U K. Experience of the past twenty-five years shows that since a whole time health service through dispensaries is an ideal one, it should be the endeavour to accept the first alternative and do the future planning of the national health service on that pattern.

CHILD AND THE LAW

The child has been a subject of special laws and legal provisions. Because of its tender years, weak physique, and inadequately developed mind and understanding, it needs protection against moral and physical harm and exploitation by others. In the formative years of its life, the child needs special care and services to realise its full potential for growth and development. There are over 250 Central and State statutes concerning children. Laws are essential to protect and help children, but to achieve their aim, these must act in conjunction with other programmes and measures for care and welfare of children.

India strives to be a welfare state. This is reflected in the Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution. The Constitution-makers were conscious of the need for special care for children. A few articles deal specifically with the protection and welfare of children.¹ The National Policy Resolution for Children, 1974, lays special stress on the responsibility of the nation for physical, mental, moral and social development of children.

All this calls for a great deal of legislative activity. The subject of 'child' does not fall exclusively either in the Union (Central) or the State field. Different matters related to child care and development are distributed among the Union, State and the concurrent lists of the Constitution. Accordingly, there are both Central and State statutes on the subject. Some statutes exclusively deal with the child, for example the Employment of Children Act, 1938, or the Children Act, 1960, but quite a number of statutes have limited specific provisions for children, for example the Factories Act, 1948, or the Indian Penal Code.

The statutes dealing with children are surveyed below under the following heads: employment of children, child welfare, criminal law, family law, contracts and torts, and suits by and against children.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN

Employment of children is to be discouraged owing to their weak physical and mental condition and the necessity to channelise their time and energy into education and other activities beneficial in developing their personality and intellectual faculties. Even if child employment is necessary in a country like India for reasons of acute poverty, it is necessary to regulate it to protect the health and physique of children. The Indian statutory provisions are designed to meet these needs.

There are a number of statutes, both Central and State, which prohibit employment of children of below a certain age, and permit the employment of children above this limit subject to certain conditions and restrictions. The State statutes generally apply to shops and establishments (like commercial establishments, restaurants and hotels, and places of amusement) in urban areas. The Central statutes apply to sectors like industries, mining and transport.

At the international level, there are the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions and Recommendations on employment of children. India has ratified several of these. Some of these conventions have special provisions for developing countries like India, these lay down lower standards than those to be followed by developed countries. In the matter of labour laws relating to children, India tries to follow the standards set by ILO Conventions. So far the ILO has adopted 18 Conventions and 16 Recommendations, which deal with children.

The Indian Laws and the ILO Conventions mainly deal with four aspects: (i) minimum age for employment of children, (ii) medical examination of children, (iii) maximum hours of work, and (iv) prohibition of night work for children.

There are several enactments which deal with the above four aspects. These include the Factories Act, 1948, the Mines Act, 1952, the Employment of Children Act, 1938 (concerned with employment of children in hazardous

occupations such as transport of passengers, goods or mail by railways, or by a port authority within the limits of a port, or a workshop wherein any of the following processes are carried on: *bidi*-making, carpet-weaving, cement manufacture including bagging of cement, cloth-printing, dyeing and weaving, manufacture of matches, explosives and fire works, mica-cutting and splitting, shellac manufacture, tanning, soap manufacture and wool cleaning, etc.); Merchant Shipping Act, 1958; Motor Transport Workers Act, 1951, Plantations Labour Act, 1951, *Bidi* and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966, and the state Shops and Establishments Acts.

As an illustration, let us take the provisions of the Factories Act. The Act prohibits employment of a child below 14 years in any factory. Children above that age can be employed subject to certain restrictions. Children above 14 years and below 18 years are required to obtain a certificate of fitness from a certifying surgeon before they can be employed. The Act also provides for initial and periodic examination of such children. Certificates of fitness granted or renewed are valid for a period of twelve months. A child belonging to the age-group 14 years to 17 years is not to be employed for night work. A child between the age of 14 and 15 years cannot work for more than 4 1/2 hours on any day; cannot work in two shifts, and is not allowed to work in more than one factory on the same day. Subject to what is stated above, a child between the age of 15 and 18 years is considered to be an adult for purposes of the various provisions of the Factories Act, provided he has a certificate from a certifying surgeon that he is fit for a full day's work in a factory. There are provisions in the Act prohibiting employment of a child in tasks which are dangerous. The Act provides for creches to be established by the employer in factories employing 30 or more women workers for the use of children under 6 years of age. The Act provides for penalties for contravention of its provisions. A wrongful

employer is punishable with imprisonment for a term upto three months or a fine upto Rs 500 or with both. Penalty can also be imposed on a parent or guardian for permitting double employment of a child. The Factories Act applies only to factories which employ a minimum number of ten persons where a manufacturing process is being carried on with the aid of power or twenty persons where it is being carried on without the aid of power.

The other statutes also prohibit employment of children below a certain age and regulate their employment above that age. There are, however, variations from Act to Act in several matters like age of employment, hours of work, medical examination. For instance, provisions of the Mines Act with respect to employment of children are more stringent than those of the Factories Act, but are less strict than those relating to employment in shops and establishments.

The Apprentices Act, 1961, regulates the training of apprentices in industry so that programme of training may be organised on a systematic basis and the apprentices may derive the maximum advantage from their training. The Act prohibits engaging children below 14 years as apprentices.

The survey reveals that while the legislation has gone a long way in ensuring the welfare and regulation of work conditions of child labour, it is still deficient judged by the international standards laid down by the ILO. Some of the reasons for this are economic backwardness obliging a family to seek employment for children; lack of educational facilities; the unorganised nature of some of the economic sectors; and the small size of manufacturing units, making the enforcement of law difficult. Thus, for employment of children, the various ages prescribed for different occupations are lower than the ILO standards. We do not have a law for agricultural labour. Smaller factories are left uncovered by law. The position is similar with regard to medical examination. We do not have laws in respect of medical examination of

children in non-industrial occupations, establishments which are not factories, establishments engaged in transport and mines above ground. Further, the age up to which medical examination is required in factories and mines is less than the ILO standards. With regard to night work also our provisions are less stringent than those laid down by the ILO Conventions.

CHILD WELFARE

In a broad sense, child welfare refers to all those measures which lead to the proper physical, social and psychological development of the child. Many of the welfare services such as nutrition programmes and child development services do not require the support of law. Law steps in only when legal sanction or compulsion is needed in the case of administration and other agencies to take action in the interest of the child. The major concern of the law is with the treatment and rehabilitation of neglected, destitute, victimised, delinquent and exploited children; primary education for children, and child health in a limited respect.

To provide for the care, protection, maintenance, welfare, training, education and rehabilitation of neglected or delinquent children, there is the Central Children Act, 1960, which applies to the Union Territories. Besides this enactment, States have their own Children Acts. Of the 22 States and 9 Union Territories, Children Acts are in force in 17 States (covering all the districts in 11 States and 85 districts out of 162 in 6 States) and 3 Union Territories².

Under the Central statute a child means a boy who has not attained the age of sixteen years or a girl who has not attained the age of 18 years. There are variations from State to State in the definition of a child in relation to his age.

The Central statute with regard to the treatment and care of children makes a distinction between neglected and delinquent children. A neglected child is one who is found

begging, or who does not have a settled place of abode or ostensible means of subsistence, or who is found destitute, whether orphan or not, or whose parent or guardian does not exercise proper care and control over him, or who lives in a brothel or with a prostitute or is found to associate with any person who leads an immoral, drunken or depraved life. The Act provides for the establishment of child welfare boards to investigate the problems of neglected children and to formulate treatment plans. Any police officer, or an authorised person, who is of the opinion that a child is apparently a neglected child, may take charge of such a child and is required to produce him before the board within 24 hours. The child, unless he is kept with his parent or guardian, is to be sent to an observation home until he is brought again before the board. After an enquiry, the board may either order the release of the child or order him to be sent to a children's home for a period till he ceases to be a child. In some cases, the board may place a neglected child under the care of a parent or guardian or any other fit person on his executing a bond. The board may commit a child suffering from a dangerous disease to an approved place for treatment.

There are differences between the Central statute and some of the State statutes. These are: instead of the child welfare board, the child may be dealt with by a juvenile court, the child may be sent to the remand home during the enquiry and certified school on the conclusion of enquiry.

Under the Central Act, the procedure for dealing with delinquent children is the same as that for dealing with neglected children, except that instead of the child welfare board, it is the juvenile court which deals with them. Further, after the decision of the court, a child is to be sent to a special school for delinquent children instead of the children's home. Thus there are separate institutions for delinquents and non-delinquents.

The Central Act also makes provisions for after-care services for the child on leaving the

children's home or special school. In the absence of proper follow-up action for the rehabilitation of a child, the whole purpose of creating special institutionalised services to deal with neglected and delinquent children is likely to get defeated.

The Central and the State statutes provide for licensing out of inmates of children's homes and special schools. The purpose is to enable the child to live with a responsible person for purposes of proper education and training in a useful trade or calling.

The child statutes also provide for protection of children against victimisation. Thus the Central Act provides for punishment of a person who, having control over a child, assaults, abandons, exposes or wilfully neglects him in a manner likely to cause him unnecessary mental and physical suffering.

Some of the more beneficial features of the Children Act are separate treatment of neglected children and delinquent children; keeping the influence of the police to the minimum; not keeping the children, whether neglected or delinquent, in police or jail custody, emphasis on rehabilitation rather than on punishment in the treatment of delinquent children.

Several State statutes provide for punishment to persons who induce girls to lead an immoral life or who behave immorally with girls. As stated earlier, under the Children Acts (Central and State) a 'neglected child' includes a girl who lives in a brothel or with a prostitute. Apart from these provisions, there is the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956. It is a Central statute which applies throughout India. The Act has several provisions aimed at suppressing immoral traffic in girls and women. Besides providing for punishment to those who facilitate this vicious practice, the Act provides for the establishment of homes for rehabilitating of such girls and women.

In addition to the Children Act dealing with child beggars, the States have separate anti-beggary statutes. For example, the Bombay

Prevention of Begging Act, 1959, provides that if a child above 5 years of age is found begging, the court before which he is brought is required to send him to a juvenile court. From then onwards, the provisions of the Bombay Children Act apply.

Article 45 of the Constitution, as stated earlier, casts an obligation on the State to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. As education is a State subject, the States have enacted the necessary legislation to that effect. The Central Government prepared a Model Draft Bill for compulsory education to be adopted by the States. In 1960, Parliament enacted the Delhi Primary Education Act. Several State legislations have been modelled on the Delhi Act. Under the Delhi Act the primary responsibility to create facilities for free primary education is on the local authorities. Primary education means education up to a class or standard not beyond the eighth class or standard, as may be prescribed. The Act provides for the imposition of a nominal fine on parents for their failure to send the child to school without any reasonable excuse. The Act also prohibits persons from employing a child which will prevent him from attending an approved school. Primary education under the Act is free.

The two matters pertaining to health being dealt with by law are small-pox and smoking. The Central Vaccination Act, 1880, provides for compulsory vaccination of children and adults. No fee is to be charged except by a private vaccinator. The various State statutes are modelled on the Central Vaccination Act. As smoking of tobacco is injurious to health, there exist Acts in the States to prevent children from smoking and to punish those who encourage them to smoke.

CRIMINAL LAW

There are special statutory provisions in relation to crimes committed by children both in respect to substantive and procedural

aspects, and also in relation to crimes against children. The basic statutes in this area are the Indian Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Children Acts, apart from a few statutory provisions in special enactments like the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956.

The Indian Penal Code recognises that "nothing is an offence which is done by a child under 7 years of age". Further, under the Code, a child above 7 years and below 12 may not be said to have committed an offence if he lacks sufficient maturity of understanding to judge the nature and consequences of his conduct with regard to the particular thing which he has done. The Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act was enacted to stop the vice of commercialised prostitution. The main thrust of the law is against the keeping and managing of brothels and other incidental matters like penalising persons who aid and promote the running of prostitution as a business. Under the Act, girls engaged in immoral traffic as such are not punishable. A girl or a woman prostitute is, however, punishable where prostitution is carried on in any premises which are within a distance of two hundred metres of any place of public religious worship, educational institution, hostel, hospital, etc., or in any premises which are within the notified area, or when she makes a positive attempt to seduce or solicit persons for purposes of prostitution in or within sight of, and in such manner as to be seen or heard from, any public place, whether from within any building or house or not. The Act also punishes persons including a girl or a woman for keeping a brothel or procuring or inducing women or girls for prostitution. The Act makes provision for releasing a girl or a woman prostitute on probation or detention in a corrective institution instead of sentencing her to imprisonment. A provision which has the effect of preventing a girl under sixteen years not to indulge in prostitution is section 375 of the I.P.C. which provides that a person having sexual intercourse with such a girl with or without her consent shall be guilty of rape.

The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, as amended in 1978 prohibits marriages between a male below 21 years and a female below 18 years of age. The Act provides punishment for a male between the age of 18 years to 21 and above if he contracts a marriage with a female child.

The Children Act, read with the Criminal Procedure Code, prescribes a special procedure for detention and trial of a delinquent child. Section 27 of the Cr.P.C. 1973 provides that a person under the age of 16 years committing an offence not punishable with death or imprisonment for life, brought before the court, may be tried by a juvenile court under the Children Act. It thus means that a child below 16 years is ordinarily to be tried by a Juvenile court and not by an ordinary court, except when the offence is punishable with death or imprisonment for life in which case the procedure will be the same as prescribed for others by the Cr.P.C. Several State Children Acts foreclose the option of the court in this regard and require that a delinquent child shall be tried by a juvenile court, except where the offence is punishable with death or imprisonment for life. The Children Act, 1960, specifically provides that no child is to be tried jointly with an adult.

While arresting a delinquent child it is the ordinary criminal justice process which comes into being. Thus, it is the police which exercises the power of arrest in such a case, but there are liberal provisions with regard to the bail for children. Section 18 of the Children Act, 1960, requires that a delinquent child is necessarily to be released on bail whether he is accused of a bailable or non-bailable offence, unless there are reasonable grounds for believing that the release is likely to bring him into association with any reputed criminal or expose him to moral danger or his release would defeat the ends of justice. So long as a child is not released on bail he is not to be kept in a police station or jail but in an observation home. Here, two deficiencies in the matter of arrest of a delinquent child and his trial may be noted. The Children Act, 1960, gives no guidelines as

to when the police is to exercise its coercive power of arrest, and in the absence of this it is not unlikely that the police may misuse its powers. A few of the States have restricted the powers of the police in this regard by permitting it to arrest children on a charge of non-bailable offence only. Secondly, at the trial of a delinquent child there is no provision for legal aid to be given by the State to the accused with the resultant danger of a child being convicted of an offence which he had not committed. To guard against such a danger, it is essential that a child is represented by a lawyer so that he does not get convicted unwillingly and out of ignorance.

For child offenders the punishment of imprisonment is not to be used. The court may pass any of the following orders against a child found guilty of an offence: administer advice or admonition; send to a special school; place under the supervision of a probation officer; place on probation of good conduct under the care of parent, guardian or any other fit person; impose fine, keep in safe custody in a prescribed place.

For purposes of their protection and welfare, the I.P.C. and a few other laws have provisions for dealing with offences committed against children. The I.P.C. mentions the following offences against children: causing of death of a living child if any part of that child has been brought forth; concealment of birth by secret disposal of the body of a child with an intentional view to withhold the disclosure of the birth of the child from the world; exposing a child below twelve years to physical risk, or deserting it with the intention of abandoning it by the parent or any person entrusted with the care of the child, kidnapping from lawful guardianship; kidnapping or maiming a child for begging, selling a child for purposes of prostitution, etc.

The S.I.T. Act prescribes punishment to persons engaged in promoting the evil of prostitution. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 provides for punishment of persons connected with the performance of child

marriages. The Young Persons Harmful Publications Act, 1956, prescribes punishment for publication and distribution of materials harmful to children. The Children Act, 1960, makes such matters as cruelty to children, exploiting them, using them for begging, etc., punishable wrongs.

FAMILY LAW

The legislation relating to family law is quite complex in India since basically it is the personal laws of different communities which are applicable in the matter of family relationship. The major communities are the Hindus (which term includes Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains), Muslims, Christians and Parsis. In the case of the Muslims, it is primarily the traditional law which applies and which is based on religion except for a minor codification here and there. The Hindu law has been codified. The Christian and Parsi laws have been codified in relation to marriage. There are, however, a few statutes which apply to all the communities, for example the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 (popularly known as the Sharda Act).

Family law is concerned with such matters as marriage, legitimacy, guardianship, adoption, and maintenance.

The laws of all the communities discourage child marriage. The Sharda Act as amended in 1978 prescribes the minimum age for marriage for a boy to be 21 and a girl to be 18. The Act prescribes penalties for its violation; but a marriage solemnised contrary to its provisions is not invalid. For finding out the validity of child marriages, one has to look to the personal law of the parties involved. The personal laws vary from communities to communities. For instance, under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, such a marriage is neither void nor voidable; under the Muslim law it is voidable at the option of the girl; under the Parsi Law it will be invalid unless the consent of the guardian has been obtained, etc. Under the Special Marriage Act, 1954, the parties belonging to any community may solemnise the marriage.

The Act prescribes the minimum age for marriage of a boy as 21 years and for a girl as 18 years. The marriage solemnised without fulfilling the age requirements of the Act is void.

Another concern of family law is the question of legitimacy of a child. The Indian Evidence Act, 1872, which applies to all the communities, deals with this question. According to its provisions, the criterion for legitimacy is not conception but birth during the marriage. The relevant section says: "The fact that any person was born during the continuance of a valid marriage between his mother and any man, or within two hundred and eighty days after its dissolution, the mother remaining unmarried, shall be conclusive proof that he is the legitimate son of that man, unless it can be shown that the parties had no access to each other at any time when he could have been begotten." The section comes into operation when the marriage is valid. The legitimacy of the child of an invalid marriage is determined by his personal law.

The personal law of the Hindus is the most liberal with regard to the legitimacy of children born of invalid marriage. Thus, the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, regards such children to be legitimate whether marriage is annulled by the court or not. Under the Muslim personal law, such children are generally regarded as illegitimate except when the marriage only is irregular (*fasid*). The provisions of the Special Marriage Act are the same as those of the Hindu Marriage Act. The Parsi and the Christian laws are silent on the subject.

As regards the disabilities of illegitimate children the position is as follows. Under the Hindu Marriage Act a child of an invalid marriage, though legitimate, succeeds only to his parents' property but not of other relations. An illegitimate child under the Hindu and Muslim laws has a right of inheritance from his mother but not father. Under the Indian Succession Act, 1925, which applies to Christian and Jews and also persons

governed by the Special Marriage Act, 1954, an illegitimate child has no right of inheritance from his parents.

Under the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, both the parents are liable to maintain their illegitimate children. Further, under the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973, which applies to all the communities, a putative father of an illegitimate child is liable to maintain him.

India has thus quite liberal provisions in the interest of illegitimate children. A number of Indian statutory provisions are on the lines of the U.N. Draft General Principles on Equality and Non-Discrimination in Respect of Persons Born Out of Wedlock. It has been stated: "Thus under section 112 of the Indian Evidence Act a child born during marriage is presumed to be legitimate though he may have been conceived earlier to the marriage. Then under the Hindu Marriage Act and the Special Marriage Act children born out of void and voidable marriages remain legitimate (Muslim law is deficient in this respect). Further, every illegitimate child is entitled to maternal filiation to the woman who gives birth to the child. Under the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, both parents are liable to maintain their illegitimate children. Legally, every person born out of wedlock enjoys the same political, social, economic and cultural rights as persons born in wedlock. A few of the matters in which our law falls short of these Draft Principles are: (i) there is no general law which provides for the establishment of paternal filiation through a variety of means, including acknowledgement, recognition of legal presumptions and judicial decision, (ii) there is no law to provide that any person born of parents who may marry each other after the birth of that person is considered to be born of that marriage; (iii) there is no law to equate illegitimate children with legitimate children in the matter of succession of property, etc. even where paternal filiation has been established".³

Protection of minors is another matter concerning family law. To protect the interest

of minors, there are laws making provisions for appointment of guardians of minor's person and property. The basic statute on the subject is the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890. This statute exists side by side with the personal laws, but it prevails over the personal law if there is a conflict. Under the Act an application can be made to a court for appointing a guardian of a minor. In appointing a guardian by the court the paramount consideration is the welfare of the child and in this connection the court is to give due regard to the personal law of the minor.

Only amongst the Hindus the law permits adoption. In the case of other communities, custom may permit adoption but the practice is not widespread. Adoption among the Hindus is based on their religion. At present adoption amongst this community is governed by the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956. Even this statute is outmoded in the sense that it is parent-based and religion is the governing factor. The motivation for this Act is not the interest of the abandoned or destitute child but that of the parents wishing to adopt a child. The Adoption of Children Bill was introduced in parliament in 1972. It was to be a secular enabling law. It was oriented to the interests of the child and provided adequate safeguards in the interest of the adopted child. However, due to the opposition from certain quarters, the Bill was withdrawn by the Government in July 1978. A new Adoption of Children Bill was introduced in Lok Sabha in December 1980. This Bill sought to provide for an enabling law of adoption applicable to all communities other than Muslim community and in addition to "and not in supersession of the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 in so far as it relates to adoption and all customary laws permitting adoption".

We have a secular law of maintenance, and also personal laws dealing with maintenance. Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code 1973, which applies to all the communities, provides that if any person having sufficient means neglects or refuses to maintain his legitimate or illegitimate minor child (whether

married or unmarried) who is not able to maintain himself, he may be ordered by a magistrate to make a monthly allowance to such child at such monthly rate not exceeding five hundred rupees in the whole. The idea behind this provision is to provide an expeditious remedy to the person concerned and also to impose criminal sanctions against the person liable to provide maintenance so that he duly complies with the order of the court. Under the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, every Hindu, whether father or mother, is bound to maintain the minor children (legitimate or illegitimate). There is no limit prescribed as to the amount of maintenance except that the court, while making an order of maintenance, is to take into account the reasonable wants of the claimant, the position and status of the parties, the value of the claimant's property and any income derived from such property or from the claimant's own earnings. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, also gives power to the court to pass suitable order for the maintenance of children while granting various matrimonial reliefs. Several marriage statutes—the Special Marriage Act, 1954, the Parsis Marriage and Divorce of Marriage Act, 1936, and the Indian Divorce Act, 1869—have somewhat similar provisions as contained in the Hindu Marriage Act. In the matter of maintenance of children other than cases involving matrimonial relief, the Parsis and Christians are governed by the Criminal Procedure Code. Muslims are governed by their own religious law in the matter of maintenance. Thus, a Muslim father is bound to maintain his son till he obtains puberty and his daughter till she gets married. If the father is poor it is the mother who has to fulfil this obligation. However, the father under the Muslim law has no obligation to maintain his illegitimate child. But in the *Hanafi* Law a mother has such an obligation towards the illegitimate child.

MINOR'S AGREEMENTS AND TORTS

Minor's agreements are governed by the Indian Contract Act, 1872. The law tries to

reconcile two conflicting positions. A minor has to be protected against unconscionable contracts which he may be led to enter due to his immaturity, but a minor has to have his existence and so some protection has to be extended even to minor's agreements. Under the Indian Contract Act, minor's agreements are void and cannot be enforced against him. However, minor's contracts for necessities are not void. The minor's estate is liable for such contracts, though he is not personally liable.

The voidness applies to minor's agreements which are executory (that is, where both the minor and the third party have to perform their part of the contract), even though a contract is beneficial to the minor. But this is not entirely true in the case of executed contracts. In some situations it has been held by the courts that the minor can be a promisee (a situation where the minor has performed his part of the contract). Further, in some situations the law permits restitution of the benefit received by the minor to the other party and *vice versa*, though the contract is void.

Under the Indian Contract Act, as interpreted by the courts, a service contract with the minor is void even if it is for his benefit, and he cannot enforce such a contract. Under the English law the position is however different. The Indian law needs to be changed in this respect. To some extent the harshness of the law has been mitigated by the Apprentices Act, 1961. Under this Act an employer is obligated to pay every apprentice during the period of apprenticeship training such stipend at a rate as may be specified in the contract of apprenticeship.

A guardian can step in to supplement the minor's incapacity to contract, otherwise the minor's property may suffer. The law permits a guardian to act on behalf of the minor for sale or purchase of property, subject to certain restrictions so as to guard against abuse of power and exploitation of minor's property. A guardian for dealing with the property of a minor may be a guardian appointed by a civil court or court of wards, a testamentary guardian, or a natural guardian.

The law of torts is essentially a judge made law. The law of torts, unlike the law of contracts, does not draw a sharp line of demarcation between a child and an adult. A child is liable for the tort committed by him as an adult person, except where liability depends on some special mental element like malice or fraud or where reasonable conduct is involved. Similarly, where tort is committed against the child by a person and the issue involved is that of contributory negligence of the child, the age and mental development are taken into account by the courts in determining contributory negligence. Under the Fatal Accidents Act, 1855, a child has a right to sue for the loss occasioned by the death of his parent as a result of an actionable wrong within the meaning of the Act. However, under the Act no damages can be claimed for any physical incapacity short of death, which may deprive the child of the benefit of the services of the parent. Again, a parent can claim damages for a tort committed against the child only where there exists a relationship of master and servant between the parent and the child, and the parent has been deprived of the child's services. To treat the relationship of parent and child as a kind of master-servant relationship in this matter is not particularly happy.

The law safeguards the interests of the minor in the matter of civil litigation. Order 32 of the Civil Procedure Code deals with suits by or against minors. No proceeding in a court can be initiated by a minor without a next friend. Similarly, a suit can be filed by a person against a minor only through the guardian of the minor.

CONCLUSION

Basically we have laws practically on every aspect of child existence and development, though they are not free from imperfections. The labour laws do not completely fulfil the ILO standards, but this is because of widespread poverty and the unorganised nature of agriculture and several other sectors of economic activity. The Children Acts are not applicable in all the districts of the country.

Further, a number of State laws do not provide for a separate treatment of delinquent children from neglected children. The power of arrest of a child suspected to have committed a crime is with the police depending on whether the offence is bailable or non-bailable. No legal aid is available from the State to children, whether neglected or delinquent, against whom proceedings have commenced. The law needs to be improved in these respects.

Our laws are quite liberal in respect of legitimacy and maintenance of illegitimate children. The Hindu law has the most liberal provisions in this regard. The law is, however, still deficient in some respects in comparison with the U N Draft General Principles on Equality and Non-Discrimination in Respect of Persons Born Out of Wedlock. We do not have a secular law of adoption, and the Hindu law on the subject is parent-oriented rather than child-oriented.

In general the laws relating to contracts, torts and suits by and against children are satisfactory, except for the need for some minor changes here and there.

S N. JAIN

NOTES

Article 15(3) enables the State to make special provisions for women and children. Article 24 provides "No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or employed in any hazardous employment". Clauses (e) and (f) of article 39 provide that the State shall direct its policy towards securing, "that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength" and that "children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment". Article 45 provides "The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years".

- 2 Government of India, *Towards Delinquency Control*, National Institute of Social Defence, Ministry of Social Welfare, New Delhi, 1979, pp 24-26
- 3 S N Jain and Usha Loghani (eds), *Child and the Law*, Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, 1979, p 140

CHILD LABOUR

A generally valid definition of child labour is presently not available either in the national or international context. Any definition turns upon the precise meanings we attach to the two components of the term 'child labour', i.e. 'child' in terms of his chronological age, and 'labour' in terms of its nature, quantum and income generation capacity. Child labour, however, can broadly be defined as that segment of the child population which participates in work either paid or unpaid.

Child labour is not a new phenomenon to our age. What is new, however, is its perception as a social problem the world over. There has been a distinct change in the recent past in the values and attitudes of the legitimising groups of society *vis-a-vis* child labour because of some new developments. In the pre-industrial agricultural society of India, children worked as helpers and learners in hereditarily determined family occupations under the benign supervision of adult family members. The workplace was an extension of the home and work was characterised by personal informal relationships. The tasks and technology that work involved were simple and non-hazardous which the child could learn smoothly, almost unconsciously, over the years through association and imitation.

The social scenario, however, changed radically with the advent of industrialisation and urbanisation. Under the impact of the newly generated centrifugal and centripetal forces, there was an unbroken stream of the

rural poor migrating to urban centres in search of livelihood. The child had to work as an individual person either under an employer or independently. His work environment endangered his physical health and mental growth and led to his exploitation. The protection and welfare of these children, therefore, became an issue of paramount social significance.

Another sociological factor bearing on the problem of child labour was the emergence of welfare consciousness on a world scale. The industrial revolution in the West generated such vast demands for manpower that even children had to be pressed into service. Contemporary writings reveal under what atrocious conditions these children had to work in coal mines and textile mills. However, once the West had built up its affluence and the baneful effects of child labour became outrageously manifest, the State took appropriate measures to meet the evil. The welfare measures enunciated had a universal appeal to human conscience. In the more recent past they have been thoughtfully embodied in various resolutions of the ILO and other organs of the United Nations. Countries of the less developed world, after their emancipation from colonial domination, also accepted a number of these resolutions even though their social and economic infrastructure was still inadequate for fulfilling all the commitments. Free India provided in its Constitution for several safeguards to protect and promote the interests of the child. These Constitutional provisions established the normative superiority of welfare considerations over the economic and revealed in bold relief the antagonism between child labour and child development.

Yet another factor highlighting the evil aspect of child labour is the recent advances in various sciences having a bearing on the child. Today, scientific knowledge has revolutionised our outlook on the care of the child and his developmental imperatives. Diffusion of this knowledge has created a new awareness in the major institutions of society as to the

relationship the child should have with his *milieu*, his need objects and his work, etc.

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Child labour, of late, has evoked deep concern. However, we must make a distinction between child labour and exploitation of child labour. Both are a problem though of different orders. Child labour as distinguished from work experience has mostly negative attributes. It can now be asserted on scientific grounds that work as a direct fulfilment of the child's natural abilities and creative potentialities is always conducive to his healthy growth. But work when taken up as a means for the fulfilment of some other needs becomes enslaving in character and deleterious in its impact. Labour is work of the latter type irrespective of the degree of strain or exploitation involved in it. Labour in the case of the child is especially harmful because the energy that should have been expended on the nurturing of his latent powers is consumed for purposes of bare survival.

Child labour is as much the cause as consequence of adult unemployment and under-employment. It at once supplements and depresses the family income. Child labour is not only a subsidy to industry but a direct inducement to the payment of low wages to adult workers. The entrance of children into the labour market reduces the volume of employment for the adult and lowers the bargaining power of adult workers. Rigours of childhood employment result in a permanently weakened and damaged labour force. Child labour involves the use of labour at its point of lowest productivity. Hence it is an inefficient utilisation of labour power. The argument that employment of children increases the earnings of the family and keeps children away from mischief is misleading. It glosses over the fact that child labour deprives children of educational opportunities, minimises their chances for vocational training, stunts their physical growth, hampers their intellectual development and, by forcing them into the

army of unskilled labourers or blind alley jobs, condemns them to low wages all their lives

CAUSES

If child labour is so positively harmful, why should millions of children join the labour force? A variety of circumstances can be cited.

In India, the tradition of educational learning outside the home was confined to the upper caste strata of society, the privileged classes. Children of the producing classes learnt the necessary skills and workways in the family. Formal education had little relevance to them. This tradition continues even today among some segments of the have-nots. Their children are inducted and indoctrinated in the culture of work from the very beginning. Step by step these children get steeped in the ethos of labour.

Stronger than tradition is the factor of chronic poverty responsible for the prevalence and perpetuation of child labour. Nearly half of India's population subsists below the poverty line. In Madras, 90.8 per cent of the families of working children have an income below Rs. 500 p.m.¹ In Bombay 78 per cent² and in Delhi 88 per cent³ of the families have a monthly income of Rs. 500 and below. In these families the child, since his very appearance in this world, is endowed with an economic mission. The income accruing from child labour may be a pittance, but it helps save the family from being overtaken by an economic crisis. Economic compulsions weigh so heavily on the poor parents that they resign themselves to collusion with the child's employer in violating the law and putting the child under risk of exploitation. Poverty and child labour beget each other and thus tend to reinforce themselves in families and communities. In agriculture, activities such as tending of cattle are tedious and time consuming. Their performance by children releases the adult members of the family for more productive work. Because of their poverty, parents not only cannot make any investment in their child's development, they are reluctant even to

support them. They want their children to fend for themselves as early as possible, much better if they become a source of income to the family. Additionally, they perceive several advantages in child's taking up a job: the job disciplines the child, it terminates his dependency, it protects him against the infection of a delinquent culture, it provides some moments of privacy to parents, and so on. In cases of parental incapacitation, children become the sole bread winners.

For a number of tasks, employers prefer children to adults. Children have a less developed ego and status consciousness. Children can be put on non-status, even demeaning jobs, without much difficulty. Children are more active, agile and quick and feel less tired in certain tasks. They are also better candidates for tasks of a helper in a grocer's shop or an auto-garage. Employers find children more amenable to discipline and control. They can be coaxed, admonished, pulled up and punished for defaults without jeopardising relations. Child labour is also cheaper to buy. They may do almost the same amount of work as an adult but they cost less in terms of wages and maintenance. The adaptive abilities of children are much superior to those of adults. Being of an impressionable age, they can be socialised by the employer according to his taste or the demands of the situation. All this explains why children are liked more for jobs such as those of domestic servants and restaurant workers.

Child workers are not organised on lines of trade unions which can militantly fight for their causes. As such, children have to submit silently to the excesses visited on them by their masters. The National Commission on Labour (1969) found that it was the feeling of sympathy rather than the desire to exploit which weighed with children's employers. Instead of condemnation they expected commendation from society for their benevolent act of saving the child from starvation and waywardness. Then there are crafts (brocade work for example) in which highest degree of sophistication and excellence

cannot be achieved unless learning is initiated in childhood itself. No finesse can be acquired if fingers have lost their suppleness and become stiff at the time of initiation. A similar logic is advanced for children engaged in acrobatics and circuses.

Child labour and non-schooling of children have a significant linkage among the poorer sections of population. In India enrolment as percentage of age-group population in 1979-80 was 83.6 per cent for the age-group 6-11 for classes I-V, but in the case of age-group 11-14 for classes VI-VIII the comparable figure was 40.2. Thus, about 16 per cent of the children in the age-group 6-11 and about 60 per cent of the children in the age-group 11-14 are not even enrolled.⁴

Many children are forced to stay at home because their parents cannot afford the prescribed minima of uniform, books and stationery. Schooling of children is eschewed by them also because it not only touches their pockets but deprives them of the income that accrues from child labour or the help that children can give. Stagnation and wastage lead poor children to drop out of the school system. A child is perhaps willingly sent to school between the age 6 to 9 because at this stage, he is more a nuisance than an asset at home. But as he crosses this age limit, the position is reversed. The child now can work at home or earn something outside. This is especially true of girls who have to assist the over-worked mothers at home. In rural areas, the clash between timings and periodicity of the school system and those of agricultural operations often leads the poorer school-going children to withdraw temporarily from school during times of sowing and harvesting or drop out altogether. In areas where the green revolution has become a reality, the wages of agricultural labourers have gone up substantially. Tempted by higher wages, labour families, local as well as migrant, press their children into service. This is adversely affecting school enrolment and attendance both in areas with high demand for labour and in those which supply labour.

Data regarding child migrant workers are

not directly available in the 1971 census. According to the 1961 census, out of about 1.34 crore child population in the cities, about 30 lakhs (22.8 per cent) were recorded as migrants, of whom about 98,000 (3.2 per cent) were workers. Sex-wise, work participation rate (WPR) was 4.8 per cent for males and 1.4 per cent for females.

Field studies also show that migrant conditions encourage child employment. In Bombay, 80.5 per cent of the working children were found to be migrants.⁵ Another study found that out of 287 slum families of working children in Bombay, only 10 per cent considered themselves as native.⁶

EXTENT OF CHILD LABOUR

In a Conference of the ESCAP region in November 1978, the International Labour Organisation placed the count of children in the labour forces of the world at 5.2 crores, Asia's share being 3.8 crores. India contributes to about a third of Asia's child labour and a fourth of the world's working children.⁷

According to the 1971 census, there are 1.07 crore child workers (less than 15 years) in the country, representing 4.66 per cent of the total child population and 5.95 per cent of the total labour force. Of these, about 79 lakhs are boys and 28 lakhs girls. The 1971 census defines 'worker' in terms of his/her 'main activity', i.e. the economically productive pursuit in which the 'worker' engages himself/herself during most of the time. Thus a person found engaged in any economically productive work which happens to be his/her 'main activity' during any one day of the week preceding the enumeration qualifies as a worker. At the 1961 census, there were 1.45 crore child workers. This shows that child labour registered a decline of 37.3 lakhs or of 25.7 per cent over the intercensal decade. Again, in 1961 for a population base of 11.33 crore children aged 5 to 14, the child labour participation rate was 12.8 per cent, whereas in 1971 it was only 7.1 per cent for a child population base of 15.08 crores. However, it must be pointed out that no conclusive significance can be attached to

these differences in view of the fact that the 1961 census adopted a more liberal definition of 'worker' in terms of 'activity' as well as reference period

The incidence of child labour is the highest in Andhra Pradesh where it accounts for about 9.0 per cent of the total labour force, 9.2 per cent of total child population and 3.7 per cent of the total population of the State (1971 Census). In fact, Andhra Pradesh accounts for 15.2 per cent of the total number of child workers in the country. Child labour is more prevalent in rural areas than in urban areas. As many as 5.31 per cent of children in rural areas are workers, whereas this ratio in urban areas is only 1.82 per cent. Out of a total of 18 crore workers in the country, 14.8 crore, i.e. 82.2 per cent, are in rural areas, whereas out of 1.07 crore child workers, 1 crore, i.e. 93 per cent, are in rural areas. The proportion of females among child workers is more than their proportion amongst the total number of workers—26.6 per cent as against 17.4 per cent. The participation of children in the labour force in the age-group of 10-14 years is very high, 28.9 per cent for males and 20 per cent for females. The 1971 child labour participation rate for boys and girls (5-14 years) separately in rural and urban sectors shows the highest activity rate of 11.40 per cent for boys in rural areas. The corresponding figure for urban areas is 4.09 per cent. Activity rates for girls are appreciably lower than those for boys and work out to 4.60 per cent in rural areas and 1.23 per cent in urban areas.⁸

The census shows that of the 1.07 crore working children, 36.03 per cent are cultivators and 42.70 per cent agricultural labourers, forming together 14.6 per cent of total number of workers engaged in agriculture. As many as 8.24 per cent are engaged in livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, plantations, orchards, etc., 0.22 per cent in mining and quarrying, 6.08 per cent in manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs, etc., 0.54 per cent in construction, 1.96 per cent in trade and commerce, 0.39 per cent in transport, storage and communication, and 3.77 per cent in other services.

The problem of child labour, by and large, has lost its poignancy in the organised sector of employment but has assumed alarming proportions in the unorganised, informal, or unregulated sector. Child labour has shown a steep decline in factories from 0.48 per cent in 1948 to 0.05 per cent in 1970. This decline is due to certain factors such as the changed management attitudes, the introduction of sophisticated machinery and rationalised production methods, the increased importance of higher productivity, the presence of trade unions, the enactment of minimum age laws and strengthening of inspection services. The National Commission on Labour comments in its report: "Our evidence reveals that employment of children is almost non-existent in organised industries. It persists in varying degrees in the unorganised sector such as small plantations, restaurants and hotels, cotton ginning and weaving, stone breaking, brick-kiln, handicrafts and road building".⁹ The Labour Bureau's study also showed that the situation regarding child labour had comparatively eased in factory industries but persisted in small and cottage industries such as match manufacture, cashew nut processing, *bidi*-making and carpet weaving.¹⁰ Thus, legislation and other factors related to child labour in the organised sector have practically banished it from that sector but, paradoxically, this very factor has led to the entrenchment of child labour in the unorganised and self-employed sector.

WORKING CHILDREN IN DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONS

A comprehensive account of child labour in rural areas is found in the final report (1975) of the Rural Labour Enquiry, 1963-65. In 1964-65, working children from agricultural labour households on an average worked for 280 days in the year and those from all rural labour households for 267 days. The duration of wage employment of agricultural child labour was 207 days in agricultural operations and 17 days in non-agricultural operations. Children were employed in diverse agricultural

activities ploughing (18 days), sowing (4 days), transplanting (10 days), weeding (22 days), harvesting (39 days), other activities (99 days) and unclassified activity (15 days) Child agricultural labourers belonging to agricultural labour households remained self-employed for 22 days, cultivation being their major occupation (accounting for 9 days) Children employed as non-agricultural labourers were self-employed for 66 days Children's earnings were 50·3 per cent of those of men¹¹ Among labourers and small farmers, 21 per cent of the children report for work, while among the prosperous group of cultivators the percentage of child labour is negligible According to the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry in 1956-57, there were about 30 lakhs child workers engaged in agriculture, the majority of them belonging to the age-group 7-12 years On an average, children constituted 5·6 per cent of the total number of earners and 24·1 per cent of the total number of helpers

In plantations, child employment is a component of employment of the family group Parents do the main field work and children assist them in plucking leaves, picking coffee berries or collecting latex, or they do secondary jobs such as weeding, spreading fertilizer, care of nurseries, digging drains, etc With their nimble fingers, many children turn out as much work as adults Children work 40 hours per week as compared to 54 hours for adults, but the wages paid to them are about half of these paid to adults In 1975, their daily wages ranged from Rs 1·57 to Rs 1·76 plus other fringe benefits Children have to work both in fair weather and foul, in the scorching summer sun and in the driving rain of the monsoon During 1971, out of the total of 80 lakhs plantation workers, as many as 51,982 (64·5 per cent) were children The percentage of child labour was the highest in Himachal Pradesh, i.e. 18·7 per cent Children generally around 8 years are hired to work as baby sitters in Assam's tea gardens for a monthly wage of Rs 5 to 8 by those fellow workers who have no children to look after their babies¹²

One of the main industries in which child

labour is prevalent is *bidi*-manufacturing in which children roll *bidis* and assist adult workers by cleaning and cutting the leaf and closing the ends In 1959, there were about 2 lakh child workers engaged in *bidi* making alone Employers pay children much less than adults on the pretext that the products did not come upto the required standard of quality A survey in Murshidabad revealed that about 9 per cent of *bidi* workers between the ages of 10 and 14 showed definite signs of chronic bronchitis and 10 per cent of the boys suffered from anaemia There was sufficient indication to suspect a high incidence of tuberculosis among the *bidi* workers and, according to the Medical Officer who was responsible for the survey, this was due to starting work at a tender age, very long hours of work, excessive overcrowding, and the peculiar posture during work which was an impediment to the healthy development of the lungs of the children¹³

In the glass bangle industry in Firozabad, the home of this industry in the country, children are employed in *jurai* (joining of ends), *chhatrai* (sorting), *katai* (engraving of different patterns with the help of abrasive wheels), *pakai* (heating) and then in counting and packaging The decoration of bangles with *hill* (liquid gold) is done by girls and women The factories run for about 8 months in the year and work only at night Children between 8 and 14 years form one-fifth of the total labour force employed in the industry They are paid Rs 3 per day for eight hours of work The temperature inside the factory is 40-45 degrees Centigrade which makes working in summer miserable Cases of asthma and bronchitis are many Workers suffer from various eye diseases

In handloom and carpet weaving, children assist the weavers They work in the middle of the loom while adults work on either end The carpet weaving industry of Jammu and Kashmir employs some 6,500 children of 8 to 10 years of age, forcing them to work 8 hours a day for Rs 80 per month The children are packed into sheds, in long rows behind giant looms feverishly picking warp and woof as a

master craftsman gives instruction. The air is thick with particles of cotton fluffs and wool and 60 per cent of the children are asthmatic or have primary tuberculosis¹⁴. The precious stone polishing industry of Jaipur employs 10,000 children all of whom work in slums or miserable hovels. The work is financed by tycoons whose middlemen procure children for a pittance and swallow the profits they generate. The young diamond cutters of Surat develop eye defects very soon. They are ruthlessly retrenched with the first early signs of eye fatigue. Many are jobless in their teens.

Countless numbers of children are working in the unorganised and self-employment sectors in towns as domestics, workers in hotels, restaurants, canteens, wayside tea stalls, shops and establishments, helpers in service stations and repair shops, construction workers, vendors, hawkers, newspaper sellers, shoe-shines, rag pickers, coolies and casual labourers, etc. Children in construction work are often hired along with their parents. By and large, even basic minimum welfare amenities are not available to workers engaged in building and construction. A child construction worker digs the earth, carries headloads of mud and mortar, removes debris, prepares mortar, breaks stones, straightens, bends and solders heavy iron rods. *Mukadams* are bribed in order to be recruited. As the construction sites change, the families of construction workers have always to be contented with make-shift housing structures. The work demands the hardest of physical labour which stunts the growth of the child and holds no promise for him.

The condition of children working in tea stalls and wayside restaurants is equally harrowing. The child employees have to work from early hours in the morning to late hours in the night with or without intermittent rest pauses for a miserable wage. The child has to work and rest most of the time in the open, exposed to the vagaries of weather. He looks unclean, ill-clad and barefooted, a sad picture of sordid exploitation.

The condition of the domestic worker

depends on the socio-economic status of the family employing him. However, his life is usually one of monotonous routine. He has often to work right through the month and through the year. The child domestics are hired and fired at the will of the employer. Very often they are not allowed to eat the same food as the family members. For 14 hours of work, these children are paid anything from Rs 25 to Rs 60 per month. It is seldom that they are given leave with pay.

Perhaps the most dangerous and demeaning job and one destructive of self-image is that of scrap collectors or rag pickers. The nature of their work and work environment is most unhygienic. These children often hail from poverty stricken scheduled caste families residing in slums. Even a casual look at their physique and clothing reveals the extent of their poverty and deprivation. They scrounge dust bins and garbage dumping grounds for waste material like paper, rags, coconut shell, tin, iron, plastic, glass pieces and even left-over food. These children develop several kinds of skin diseases. While collecting rusted iron pieces, they may receive cuts on their hands and become susceptible to tetanus. The sharp glass pieces lying hidden in the garbage, may injure their bare feet and the injuries may develop into festering wounds. However, what they do has a bearing on the urban economy. Many a production enterprise is based on the recycling of these wastes and would come to a halt if their supply were totally stopped. Though their work is degrading, these children manage to earn Rs 5 or so a day.

LEGAL PROVISIONS

The Constitution of India provides for the care and protection of and adequate facilities for the proper development of its future citizens as is evident from Articles 15, 24, 39, 42, 43 and 45. In pursuance of these Constitutional provisions, the Parliament adopted in August 1974 the National Policy for Children and resolved *inter alia* that children "shall be protected against neglect, cruelty and exploitation" and that "no child under 14

years shall be permitted to be engaged in any hazardous occupation or be made to undertake heavy work''

Thirteen major legislative enactments provide legal protection to children in various occupations. The Factories Act, 1948 (amended in 1949, 1950 and 1954) prohibits the employment of children below 14 years of age in factories. A child is not permitted to work during night (10 p.m. to 6 a.m.) and for more than 4 1/2 hours in a day, with a spread-over of 5 hours. Restrictions have also been laid down on the employment of children in certain dangerous occupations. A special register has to be maintained by the employer in respect of child labour to satisfy the inspecting authorities that provisions regarding child labour are implemented. A young person can be employed in a factory only if his fitness and age are duly certified by the certifying surgeon, the certificate issued being valid for a year only. The adolescent or the child must be issued a token marked "P" (protected person) which he must carry on his person during working hours. Rest, shelters, canteens, etc. are also to be provided for all workers, including child labourers. The employer is punishable with imprisonment for a term upto 3 months or a fine upto Rs. 500 or with both for contravention of the provisions.

Under the Mines Act, 1952, 'child' means a person who has not completed his fifteenth year. This Act also extends to the whole of India and includes all excavations where any operation for the purpose of searching for or obtaining minerals is carried out. The Act provides that no child shall be employed in any mine nor shall any child be allowed to be present in any part of a mine which is below ground or in any open cast working in which any mining operation is being carried on.

Under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, 'child' means a person who has not completed his fifteenth year. The Act covers all tea, coffee, rubber, cinchona and cardamom plantations which measure 10 117 hectares or more, in which 30 or more persons are

employed. The employment of children below the age of 12 is prohibited under the Act. However, the Act permits the employment of a child above 12 years only on a fitness certificate from the appointed surgeon every twelve months. This is the only Act wherein statutory provisions for education, housing and medical facilities have been made the responsibility of the employer.

The Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, applies to ships registered in India. The Act prohibits employment of children below the age of 15 with certain exceptions. It also prohibits employment of young persons below the age of 18 as trimmers and stokers except under certain specific conditions. The responsibility of administering the Act rests with the Director General of Shipping.

The Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961, extends to the whole of India and applies to every motor transport undertaking employing 5 or more transport workers. The State Governments are, however, empowered to apply all or any of the provisions of this Act to any motor transport undertaking employing less than 5 workers. The Act prohibits the employment of children below 15 years of age in any capacity in the motor transport undertaking.

The Children (Pledging of Labour) Act, 1933, applies to the whole of India and declares void any agreement, written or oral, to pledge the labour of a child below 15 years by the child's parent or guardian in return for any payment of benefit. An employer who knowingly employs such a child is liable to a fine upto Rs. 200. The parent or guardian of the child is liable to be punished with a fine upto Rs. 50.

The Employment of Children Act, 1938, prohibits employment of children under 15 years in any occupation connected with (a) transport of passengers, goods, or mails by railway or (b) a port authority within the limits of any port or (c) cinder picking, clearing of an ash pit or building operation in railways premises or (d) the work in a catering

establishment at a railway station, involving the movement of a vendor or any other employee of the establishment from one platform to another or into or out of a moving train or (e) work relating to the construction at a railway station or where such work is done in close proximity to or between the railway lines. No child who has not completed his fourteenth year shall be employed or permitted to work in any workshop wherein any of these processes is carried on: (i) *bidi* making, (ii) carpet weaving; (iii) cement manufacturing including bagging of cement, (iv) cloth printing, dyeing and weaving, (v) manufacture of matches, explosives and fire works, (vi) mica cutting and splitting, (vii) shellac manufacture, (viii) soap manufacture, (ix) tanning, (x) wool cleaning. These provisions, however, do not apply to workshops where the work is done by the occupier with the aid of his family only or to any school establishment.

The Apprentices Act, 1961, lays down that no person shall be qualified for being engaged as an apprentice to undergo apprenticeship training in any designated trade unless he is at least 14 years of age and satisfies such standards of education and physical fitness as may be prescribed. The Act extends to the whole of India.

The *Bidi* and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966, extends to the whole of India and prohibits employment of children below the age of 14 years in any industrial premises. The employment of young persons, those between 14 and 18 years of age, is prohibited between 7 00 p.m. and 6 00 a.m. The administration of the Act rests with the State Governments.

The Minimum Wages Act, 1948, provides for fixation by State Governments of (a) minimum time rates of wages, (b) minimum piece rate of wages, (c) guaranteed time rates of wages for different occupations and (d) localities or classes of work and adults, adolescents, children and apprentices. The Act is aimed at occupations which are less well organised and more difficult to regulate and where sweated labour is more prevalent or

where there is much scope for exploitation of labour.

The Contract Labour (Regulations and Abolition) Act, 1970, applies to establishments/contractors employing 20 or more workers and extends to the whole of India. There are no specific provisions under the Act pertaining to the employment of children.

The working conditions of employees in shops and commercial establishments are governed largely by the Shops and Establishments Acts of State Governments and rules framed thereunder. These Acts and rules *inter alia* regulate the daily and weekly hours of work, rest intervals, opening and closing hours of establishments, payment of wages, overtime pay, holidays with pay, annual leave, employment of children and young persons. The minimum age for employment of children in different States varies from 12 years to 14 years. These Acts also prohibit the employment of young persons during night, the time varying from 7 00 p.m. to 6 00 a.m. The hours of work for children are also fixed. These vary from 3 to 7 hours per day in different States, with half an hour to one hour break after 3 to 4 hours.

The Atomic Energy Act, 1962 (Radiation Protection Rules, 1971) covers all workers in factories and mines producing atomic and other mineral products emitting radiation or all working places where radiation takes place. Children below the age of 18 are prohibited to work except when they are permitted by the competent authorities.

These enactments have their own limitations as their applicability is generally employment based, i.e. on the basis of the number of persons employed in an undertaking duly registered under the relevant Acts. The protective provisions of these enactments do not cover children employed in smaller establishments. As stated earlier, the employment pattern of child labour, however, goes to show that the majority of child workers actually work in the unorganised and small

scale sector, including the rural and agricultural vocations. The legal protection in this sector is not only inadequate but often it is not available, because of the non-implementation of the laws. It is difficult to enforce any law in this sector because the enterprises generally depend on family labour for their operation, and employment is of a scattered nature. The existing laws do cover the health and working conditions of workers, including child labour, but except the Plantations Labour Act, no other enactments provide for schooling and housing facilities for workers. In a segment of the mining section (such as coal, iron, mica, dolomite and limestone), schooling, medical, educational and recreational facilities are sought to be supplemented by statutory welfare funds created for these purposes. In some States, Labour Welfare Boards seek to provide such facilities for industries within the state sphere, but these facilities are directed more to the care of the children and families of the workers and not specifically to child labour in these vocations. In the uncovered, unorganised and scattered establishments and services, such measures as exist pose a tremendous problem of implementation. For, even in establishments covered under the Factories, Plantations and other enactments, the inspecting staff is so inadequate that quite a sizeable number of them are perhaps not visited even once a year. A study of working children in Bombay revealed that out of 159 establishments as many as 150 were never visited by any concerned officials.¹⁵ Owners of establishments employ several mechanisms to defeat the purposes of the laws. When an inspector enters the premises of the factory, children are asked to make good their escape by the back door. They are also tutored to stop work on the approach of an inspector, especially when their escape is not possible. The names of child workers are not put on any kind of labour register that could be checked or inspected. When the inspector questions the presence of the child in the factory premises, the employer gives evasive explanations like

'the child has brought tiffin or a message for his parent', 'there is none at home to look after the child', or 'the child is simply playing there'. When there is an accident, the employment of the child is flatly denied.

The ILO seeks to achieve its objective of protecting children by adopting international labour standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations. These labour standards are adopted by the International Labour Conference every year. A Convention seeks to create obligations of a binding nature and its ratification involves complete compliance with all its provisions. A Recommendation, on the other hand, contains provisions which are generally in the nature of guiding principles for action and may be implemented progressively and in parts. India has ratified 6 out of 18 ILO Conventions in respect of children and young persons in industrial and non-industrial occupations—3 out of 10 relating to minimum age, 1 out of 5 relating to medical examination and 2 out of 3 relating to night work.

REMEDIAL MEASURES

After independence, the Government of India, has displayed keen concern for the well-being of the child. Under the Central and State Children Acts, a chain of residential welfare institutions have been set up for destitute children who otherwise are compelled to join the labour force in urban centres. Under its Policy Resolution on Children (1974), the Government has constituted a National Children's Board at the highest level with the Prime Minister as its President to coordinate, plan, implement and evaluate child welfare programmes in the country. In February 1979, it set up a Committee on Child Labour to examine the problem in depth and suggest remedial measures. These and other welfare measures notwithstanding, the problem of child labour is bound to persist on the Indian scene for decades to come. As long as poverty exists, child labour too will exist and any attempt to abolish it totally through legal

recourse would not be successful. A total legal abolition of child labour, moreover, may generate unintended and undesirable social consequences. The only rational alternative seems to be to ban child labour in certain hazardous areas and ameliorate the conditions of work in others so that child labour ceases to be inimical to the child's growth and development.

The Committee on Child Labour felt that each category of working children had its own peculiar problems and as such there was need to adopt a multiple policy approach in dealing with their problems. It recommended constitution of Advisory Boards both at the Central and State levels to maintain constant surveillance on the problems of working children. It was of the view that the minimum age for entry into any employment should be 15 years and that the existing laws which prescribed an age lower than this should be suitably amended. According to the Committee, the existing laws relating to prohibition and regulation of employment of children should be consolidated into a single comprehensive law and the new legislation should adopt uniform definitions of expressions like 'child' and 'adolescent' and prescribe "hours of work" and "conditions of work", etc. The Committee urged that the penalty provided in the existing laws for violation of provisions relating to child labour should be made more deterrent. It underlined more comprehensive statutory provisions for educational facilities for child workers and also pressed for inclusion of education as a part of labour welfare measures to be adopted by employers. The Committee felt that supplementary nutrition should be provided to working children by employers who could be given suitable subsidy for this programme¹⁶.

If parents' earnings increased, they would be less inclined to press their children into service. The least that could be done in this respect is to enforce the Minimum Wages Act strictly by providing adequate implementation machinery. Parents must be made education conscious through concerted propaganda and

publicity by mass media. There is need to vocationalise school education and make the school environment and curricula more attractive to sustain the interest of school-going children. There is also need to introduce measures like supply of books, stationery, uniforms, mid-day meals and evening snacks in schools attended predominantly by children from poor families. A network of formal or non-formal education centres should be set up to cater to the educational needs of working as well as non-working and non-school going children during suitable hours. School timings and periodicity should be adjusted in rural areas to the needs of the community. Vocational training centres should be established in depressed areas to provide facilities for employment counselling, vocational guidance and training in skilled and semi-skilled jobs. This would reduce the incidence of child labour.

The provisions of the Apprentices Act may be extended to cover children under 14 for purposes of training in selected trades. Community creches and day care centres should be set up in rural areas and urban slums so that older children may be relieved of the responsibility of looking after young siblings and enabled to attend school. In order to save children from stiff competition with adults, it would be desirable if certain existing non-hazardous occupational areas are identified and preference given in these to employment of children. It is essential to identify hazardous occupations industry by industry and to ban child employment therein completely. As envisaged in the Constitution, it would be desirable to provide for the minimum age of employment at 14 in all Central and State legislation. This age bar, however, should not apply to training of apprentices above 12 years of age. There is a paramount need to augment the strength of enforcement and inspecting staff under the Factories Act as well as Shops and Establishments Acts. It is important to orient and involve trade unions in matters relating to the welfare and protection of working children against exploitation. The

lapses of employers in implementing legislative and other provisions in regard to child labour should be widely published in order to build up strong public opinion against defaulters. There is urgent need to educate employers as well as the public about the existing legal provisions relating to working children. Voluntary organisations can set up special employment bureaux to facilitate suitable placement of children in need of work and persuade employers to provide healthy and humane conditions for working children. There is a clear need to evolve a National Children's Code, incorporating provisions of Children's Act 1960, with model rules, uniform standards and norms governing employment of children in various sectors and vocations.

MUSAFIR SINGH

NOTES

- 1 K N George, "Child Labour in the City of Madras", paper presented at the *National Seminar on Employment of Children in India*, 25 to 28 November 1975
- 2 *Working Children in Bombay—A Study*, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, New Delhi, 1978
- 3 *Working Children in Urban Delhi—A Research Report*, Indian Council of Child Welfare, New Delhi, 1977
- 4 Government of India, *Annual Report 1981-82*, Ministry of Education and Culture, New Delhi, p 4
- 5 Mandakini Khandekar, *A Report on the situation of Children and Youth in Greater Bombay*, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay, 1970
- 6 *Working Children in Bombay—A Study*, op cit
- 7 Ashish K Chakraverti, "Child Labour and Transition Economy The Indian Scene", paper presented at the *Conference on Child in India*, New Delhi, 22-24 March 1979
- 8 *Ibid*
- 9 Government of India, *Report of the National Commission on Labour*, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation, 1969, p 386
- 10 Government of India, *Child Labour in India*, Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour, 1954
- 11 S D Punekar, "Child Labour in Unorganised Industries and Rural Vocations", paper presented at

the *National Seminar on Employment of Children in India*, New Delhi, November 1975, pp 25-28

- 12 *The Nagpur Times*, Sunday, 20 February 1977
- 13 *Child Labour in India*, op cit
- 14 *Femina*, 8-22 February 1979
- 15 *Working Children in Bombay, A Study*, op cit
- 16 *Report of the Committee on Child Labour*, Ministry of Labour, Government of India, December 1979, pp 50-51

CHILD WELFARE POLICY

The concept of a national policy for children has gained wide acceptance, particularly in the last decade. Partly, this is due to the fact that child population in India poses bewildering problems for planners and administrators because of its immense size and its diverse demands on limited resources. The need for a clear and consistent policy has been more evident since independence because of frequent shifts in emphasis and abandonment of ongoing schemes for children in preference to new ones, resulting in wastage of effort and a sense of uncertainty. The concept of a policy for children presupposes a comprehensive definition of objectives of action related to children, outlining the strategies and measures to achieve the objectives, determination of priorities and actions projected over a time perspective, delineation of roles assigned to the government, voluntary agencies, the family, and the community, in achieving agreed tasks; and, equally important, allocation of resources.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

The National Policy for Children as a formal statement was adopted in 1974, nearly 27 years after India became independent. One of the reasons for a rather slow evolution of a policy for children in India has been the cultural

attitude towards the family as the natural and main institution for ensuring the nurture of children. The traditional Indian attitude towards children as objects of adoration and love and a symbol of fulfilment for the family was reinforced by religious and social customs which marked each important stage in the development of a child, thus providing guidance for individual action regarding the upbringing of children.

When the family for any reason was unable to fulfil its role, the community stepped in to ensure care for such children. *Madhukari*, a practice of providing meals for poor school-going children on a rotation basis by better-off families, and *Annachhatras* or *Maths* sponsored by charitable or affluent individuals to provide free lodging and boarding to poor children, are examples of community traditions emphasizing charity towards needy children. The assumption of this responsibility by the government has been somewhat halting and uneven and a consistent pattern has yet to emerge. The important implication is to develop policies and programmes which would reinforce and strengthen the family and the community in performing their traditional role towards children in the context of stresses and strains caused by social changes.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The long period of social, economic and political disintegration during the nearly thousand years preceding the mid-nineteenth century was characterised by the decline of traditional social institutions leading to serious neglect of children. During the hundred years prior to independence in 1947, there were various manifestations of concern for children which led to activities directed towards different categories of disadvantaged children. Some of these efforts were aimed at eradication of social evils such as child marriage and female infanticide. The need to provide care and education to orphans and handicapped children led to the establishment of a number of institutions initially under

caste, religious or sectarian and, later, under secular auspices. The most significant trend during the struggle for independence was a recognition of children as a potential force in the national resurgence. The experiments in pre-school and basic education initiated by Gandhi and others since the early thirties were a recognition that society had an obligation to provide a congenial environment for the blossoming of the fullest creative potential of children. The pre-independence period also saw the beginning of enactment of laws to segregate juvenile offenders from adult criminals and to provide for their separate treatment. Awareness regarding a conscious and deliberate policy for children gathered momentum only after independence.

In the absence of a consistent articulation and a substantive expression of a policy relating to children until 1974, the main features of policy have to be gleaned from a variety of scattered developments in post-independence India. A brief review of the development will be helpful in understanding various steps in the development of a formal statement of a national policy for children.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

A significant expression of national concern for children is to be found in the constitutional and legislative provisions which govern the rights of children and obligations of government, society and family towards children. Article 24 lays down that no child below 14 shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment. Article 39 of the Directive Principles of State Policy requires the State to ensure that children are not forced by economic necessity to enter vocations unsuited to their age and strength. It further prescribes that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner in conditions of freedom and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

Article 45 requires the State to endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years

Most of these provisions are protective in nature and do not include a positive directive to provide comprehensive services to promote the wellbeing of children. At the same time they do not recognise the vulnerability of children to neglect and exploitation and accept State responsibility to protect them from situations which may jeopardise their development

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

While the constitutional provisions contain a broadly idealistic expression of a concern for children, legislative provisions are expected to take it further towards a machinery to facilitate its application in practice. A review of legislation relating to children is, therefore, useful for seeing how and whether it complements constitutional provisions for safeguarding the interests of children

The salient provisions of the civil laws relating to children prescribe the minimum age for marriage of boys and girls, empower courts to appoint a guardian for a minor child's person or property, and include the mother, along with the father, as the natural guardian of a minor Hindu child. The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, which provides for the adoption of a Hindu child by a Hindu childless adult, mainly meets the religious and other needs of the adopting family. There is so far no secular legal provision converging all communities to place a destitute or an orphan child with a suitable adoptive home primarily to meet the child's needs of a loving and secure home life

Efforts have been made by social workers for a comprehensive enactment on adoption of children, but this has not yet materialised, due to the opposition of some communities. Other types of protective laws deal with standards of care of children in institutions, e.g. the Women's and Children's Institutions

(Licensing) Act, 1960. Unfortunately, the implementation of these Central Acts and some other similar State Acts is limited to small geographical areas. Furthermore, an efficient administrative machinery for enforcement of these laws in order to serve their educational and protective functions is lacking in most States¹

Laws dealing with delinquent and destitute children represent another area where the policy embodied in the laws is very progressive but implementation leaves a great deal to be desired. Implicit in the Central Children Act of 1960 (which was expected to serve as a model Act) and State Children Acts is a recognition that children who are delinquent as well as those who are destitute, abandoned, neglected or exploited must be viewed essentially as victims of unfavourable social situations. The government, therefore, has the obligation to ensure that conditions for their rehabilitation and normal development are provided. The Acts prescribed a special way of handling their cases through juvenile courts and child welfare boards and for providing services aimed at their treatment and rehabilitation. The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act of 1956 attempts to protect minor girls exploited for immoral purposes by unscrupulous adults

While one cannot find serious flaws in the provisions of Children Acts, their application is limited largely to urban areas. Some States have not yet implemented Children Acts. Furthermore, their implementation is far from satisfactory since the differential treatment of children envisaged in the Acts is not possible in the absence of adequate institutional and non-institutional facilities. In fact this may almost be cited as a case of over-zealous adoption of legislative measures similar to those of the Western countries, without preparing the basic network of services for their implementation

A curious aspect of the spotty and uneven development of welfare policies is that correctional administration and institutional care for destitute and dependent children

seems to constitute a disproportionate share of the preoccupation of a number of State social welfare departments. This has tended to give them a predominant bias towards relief and rehabilitation, at the cost of a more developmental approach towards children in general. The meticulous care with which delinquent and dependent children are segregated in some of the Children Acts at times tends to blur the view of the child as a total entity and leads to rather unreal and impractical approaches to the care of children.

A third important segment of laws deals with children who are employed. Provisions restricting the employment of children below a certain age and in certain establishments go back to the early thirties, e.g., Indian Merchant Shipping Act 1923, Employment of Children Act 1930. Employment of children below a minimum age in certain occupations during night hours and in hazardous operations is prohibited by a number of Central and State laws, e.g., Plantation Labour Act of 1951, Factories Act of 1948, the Mines Act of 1952, Shops and Establishment Acts, etc. Most of these laws also stipulate maximum working hours, prescribe rest periods and require certificates of physical fitness through medical examination. Besides, India has ratified several ILO Conventions.

While the laws by themselves are acknowledged as quite satisfactory in terms of their provisions, they cover primarily the organised sectors and even here their enforcement is ineffective. A very large number of child workers are in the unorganised sector, e.g., agricultural work, metal work, carpet weaving, small shops, eating places, household work, etc., and are made to work for very long hours and get incredibly low wages.² The protective laws are unable to cover these children, particularly since the desperate need to augment low family incomes makes many parents connive willingly at the exploitation of children. The inadequacy of inspection staff, absence of reliable birth certificates and inability to provide schooling for all children contribute to a travesty of the

enforcement of child labour legislation. Besides, since the relevance of the present educational system to the preparation for productive adult life can be questioned, a realistic approach would be to provide educational and recreational facilities for children who must be engaged in remunerative work, especially away from their families.

FIVE YEAR PLANS AND POLICY

The content of the Five Year Plans represents a significant reflection of the Government's policy towards children, although one may concede that there is usually a wide gap between the plans and their implementation. Policies having important direct implications for the well-being of children are generally included in other sectors than social welfare, viz. health, nutrition, education, welfare of backward classes, etc. The fact that child welfare is contained in the social welfare sector has important implications. Since social welfare programmes have been concerned with services for various categories of dependent and handicapped persons, child welfare also tends to be viewed as being largely oriented toward relief and rehabilitation. The imperative need to view investment in children essentially as part of national human resource development tends to get blurred in our plans.

The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) acknowledged the need to give greater consideration to children and recognised malnutrition as a major cause for their ill-health and retardation. In the light of scarcity of government resources, the main reliance for providing various services for children was placed on voluntary agencies. The establishment of the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) in 1953 in order to coordinate and strengthen voluntary efforts provided a significant impetus for mobilising services for children and women. Welfare Extension Projects sponsored by the CSWB were a forerunner of the later more extensive programmes for the well-being of pre-school children and

education of mothers in remote rural and tribal areas

The First Plan accorded a high priority to Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services and emphasised the need to augment their capacity and to improve their quality by supporting the training of health personnel. The Government was to assume primary responsibility in MCH services and voluntary organisations were to supplement governmental activities. The Plan stressed the importance of pre-school education which was to be promoted through voluntary agencies assisted by government grants-in-aid. The Government was expected to give technical support through research in methods of pre-school education and improved training of teachers.

The Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) attempted to coordinate Welfare Extension Projects with similar activities initiated by Community Development Blocks, thus emphasising the role of local bodies and communities in promoting services for children. Since malnutrition was recognised as a serious problem there was a need to identify priority groups for nutrition programmes, namely, pre-school and school children and expectant and nursing mothers. The Second Plan stressed the provision of free and compulsory education to all children between 6 and 14 years. Services for juvenile delinquents and for physically and mentally handicapped children received special attention in the Central and State plans. The Second Plan also initiated the integration of MCH services with the work of primary health centres, thus providing a stronger and wider base for MCH services.

The Third Plan (1961-66) attempted to implement a programme significant from the point of view of evolution of a concept of inter-sectoral convergence of services for children in a defined geographical area, namely, Integrated Child Welfare Demonstration Projects. These were to be launched at least one in each State to bring about complete coordination in services

provided by medical and public health, education, social welfare and other agencies. Another crucial aspect of the Third Plan was the importance given to the training of child welfare workers, the creation of a new cadre of Balsevikas, and the establishment of a number of Balsevika training centres.

Unfortunately, there was no evidence of a systematic follow-up of the Demonstration Projects and their experimental nature was lost sight of in the manner in which they were implemented in most States. Without a proper assessment, these Projects were replaced by a new programme, Family and Child Welfare Projects (FCW), sponsored by the Central Government in 1967. The FCW Projects tried to provide integrated services to children, particularly of pre-school age, and education of women in health, nutrition, child care and home crafts.

The FCW Programme was expanded during the Fourth Plan (1969-74) and was a step towards the development of a package of basic minimum services which characterised later approaches. The Plan emphasized the need to accord a higher priority for the care of destitute children. Services for neglected children were to be augmented by extending the coverage of Children Acts to wider areas. But the major thrust was through giving grants-in-aid to voluntary agencies engaged in services for destitute children. A significant development was the recognition that non-institutional services such as foster care and adoption had much to offer to children who for various reasons were deprived of normal family relationships. Rehabilitation of handicapped children was also given a boost through assistance for the development of national centres for various categories of the handicapped, such as the blind, deaf, mentally retarded and orthopaedically handicapped. The need for providing technical support to voluntary organisations and the role of systematic surveys and research to aid planning of welfare services were stressed for improving the effectiveness of these services.

In the health sector, high priority was given

to family planning and its integration with MCH. A very desirable strategy suggested was to use Family Welfare Centres as the major channel for immunisation for children and expectant mothers and for prevention of nutritional anaemia and blindness. The linkage between survival of children through ensuring reduction of child mortality and morbidity and acceptance of family planning was thus officially recognised.

The Fifth Plan (1974-79) attempted to give a new orientation to social welfare by shifting the earlier emphasis on curative and rehabilitative services to the adoption of a preventive and developmental approach. The Government would therefore adopt a strategy which would enhance the capacity of families, groups and communities to cope more effectively with problems and needs arising from social change. The inclusion of the Minimum Needs Programme in the Fifth Plan reinforced this new orientation to the role of social welfare. Voluntary organisations were to be encouraged to expand their services and improve their quality through grants-in-aid. FCW was replaced by the new programme, namely the Integrated Child Development Services, to ensure healthy development of children, particularly those below 6 years of age in under-developed areas through a package of services. Supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-up, referral services, nonformal pre-school education, and nutrition and health education of mothers constituted the package, which was to be coordinated with functional literacy for women, family welfare services and provision of safe drinking water to the extent possible. Services for handicapped children were to be qualitatively improved and delinquent and destitute children were to be assisted in their rehabilitation through strengthening non-institutional services such as guidance and counselling, foster home care and adoption.

During the Sixth Plan (1980-85), social welfare programmes aimed at enabling the deprived sections of the population to overcome their social, economic and physical

handicaps and improve their quality of life. Preventive and developmental services were given preference over institutional care as the latter is very costly and can be a substitute for family care only in exceptional cases. In the field of child welfare, Integrated Child Development Services were expanded. The initial Sixth Plan target of 600 projects was later raised to 1,000. Emphasis was on the development of a monitoring system. Efforts were made to involve the local community in all aspects of programme improvement.³

OTHER CONTRIBUTORY DEVELOPMENTS

Apart from the experience gained through successive national Plans, various other national and international developments have contributed to creating a favourable climate towards the formulation of a national policy for children. Since independence, a number of special committees have addressed themselves to specific aspects of child care. The Health Survey and Planning Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1959, the Study Team on Social Welfare and Welfare of Backward Classes appointed by the Planning Commission in 1958, the Committee on Child Care appointed by CSWB in 1960, and the Committee for Preparation of Programmes for Children appointed in 1967 by the Department of Social Welfare may be mentioned as illustrations. Even though all of their recommendations did not immediately get reflected in plan programmes, their advocacy was instrumental in highlighting the need to give priority to children below six years, to strengthen preventive health services including MCH, and to develop comprehensive multi-sectoral services to meet the diverse needs of children in a coordinated manner. The Education Commission of 1964, drew pointed attention to the importance of pre-school education, particularly for children from disadvantaged social situations. The Study Group on the Pre-school Child set up by the Ministry of Education in 1972, in its recommendations, opened a wide range of alternative ways of providing basic services for

pre-school children in rural and other difficult areas

A large number of voluntary agencies and national associations concerned with handicapped children have contributed towards creating a greater awareness of the needs of various categories of handicapped and destitute children, and the role of government in development of services to meet their needs. In the field of pre-school education, voluntary groups have played a major role in shaping government thinking regarding responsibility for special services to children from disadvantaged situations. The Indian Council for Child Welfare and the CSWB along with their State branches have been instrumental in focusing attention on children as a major national asset, the need for training of workers, support to voluntary agencies, and importance of community involvement in developing programmes for children.

Certain developments outside India have also helped to draw the attention of the government and the people to the needs of children. Among these may be mentioned the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959) and the efforts of international agencies, professional bodies interested in child development and social workers, which influenced the creation of a favourable climate for the National Policy for Children. UNICEF and WHO have consistently supported strengthening of maternal and child health services and their integration in the services of Primary Health Centres, improved training of doctors, para-medical personnel and *dais* in order to give better protection to mothers and children. UNICEF has also strongly underlined the need to give the highest priority to the young child, and has been promoting an inter-sectoral and coordinated approach to the diverse needs of children, and the need to take care of mothers during prenatal and postnatal periods.

One of the important recommendations of the Committee for the Preparation of a Programme for Children (1968), a group representing all important sectors, was the

adoption of a national policy for children. This had set in motion efforts to draft a comprehensive policy statement. The preparation of an eight-point Draft Programme on Child Welfare by the Indian Council for Child Welfare in 1973 provided an added stimulus to these efforts, culminating finally in the adoption of a National Policy for Children in 1974.

THE NATIONAL POLICY FOR CHILDREN

The introduction to the policy statement adopted in 1974 states "It shall be the policy of the State to provide adequate services to children, both before and after birth and through the period of growth, to ensure their full physical, mental and social development." This is a welcome recognition of the importance of safeguarding children through all periods of growth—prenatal and postnatal—thus including care of pregnant women and nursing mothers. The fifteen-point programme takes a comprehensive and total view of the needs of children, both normal as well as those suffering from various types of handicaps—physical, mental and social—and urges provision of services to promote their development into socially useful and productive members of society.

The provisions refer to health care and nutrition of children and mothers, nutrition education of mothers, free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14, and recreation, and cultural and scientific activities. A significant feature of the policy statement is the reference to treatment, education and rehabilitation of children who are physically handicapped, emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded. The statement refers to special assistance to children belonging to weaker sections, children of scheduled castes and tribes, and those belonging to other economically weaker sections in urban and rural areas. Delinquent, destitute, neglected and exploited children are to be provided facilities to overcome their difficulties and to become useful citizens. A notable feature is the mention of special

programmes to identify and assist gifted children, especially those who may not usually have access to adequate opportunities. Another significant aspect is the emphasis placed on helping children within the context of the normal family, neighbourhood and community environment and on strengthening family relationships.

While the statement of an explicit policy regarding children is most welcome, it should be taken as a beginning. Realistic plans indicating priorities, a sequential and phased implementation, and strategies for achieving its objectives will have to be spelt out in order that the policy can serve as a practical guide for action.

One of the notable developments subsequent to adoption of the National Policy for Children has been the constitution of a National Children's Board in 1975 to serve as a forum for planning, continuous review and coordination of policies and programmes for children. The Board is headed by the Prime Minister as its President, and has among its members the Ministers of Finance, Health, Education and Social Welfare, representatives of State Governments and eminent individuals associated with child welfare. All States and almost all Union Territories have established State Children's Boards and, in some States, committees have been appointed at regional/district/block levels.

The important task of giving an operational shape to the National Policy for Children was set in motion when the National Children's Board, at its September 1979 meeting, agreed that a perspective plan for child welfare covering the next twenty years be prepared to provide guidelines for programmes at Central and State levels and to ensure that these are integrated with the national development plans.

IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL POLICY

The launching of the Integrated Child Development Services programme (ICDS) in

the Fifth Plan represents a logical culmination of efforts at developing a package of basic services for children pursued through the four Five Year Plans and reiterated in the National Policy for Children. The Minimum Needs Programme adopted during the Fifth Plan and its revised version in the Sixth Plan affirms the approach of providing basic services in a coordinated manner in order to maximise their mutually reinforcing impact. The ICDS was initiated on a pilot basis during 1975-76 with the launching of 33 projects (17 rural, 12 tribal and 4 urban) to provide for needy children below 6 years, pregnant and nursing women, immunisation, health check-up and referrals, supplementary feeding, health and nutrition education, and non-formal pre-school education. The programme was extended to cover 200 projects by 1980-81 and States are now encouraged to take up more areas under the ICDS. The revised target for the Sixth Plan was 1,000 ICDS projects.

The preventive and promotional approach, with stress on coordinated delivery of basic services and a departure from institutional services, reflected in the ICDS, is most welcome. However, the quality of implementation of ICDS projects in some States raises a number of questions regarding adequate understanding of the objectives of the programme at the State and local levels. The question of sponsorship, whether it should be by the Centre or the States, has also come up. It is important to note that when the Special Nutrition Programme (SNP) was transferred to the State sector during the Fifth Plan period, its expansion received a setback and in some States even the Fourth Plan levels could not be maintained, which indicates the low priority given to this programme by some State Governments. During the Fifth Plan, a programme for establishing creches and day-care centres for children of working and ailing mothers from low income groups received a boost and by 1981-82 about 1.25 lakh children benefited through grants-in-aid provided by the Union Ministry of Social Welfare to voluntary organisations for this purpose.

The strategies indicated in the Sixth Plan are significant and make a departure from the ameliorative *ad hoc* approach to meet the needs of the sick, the handicapped and the destitute and suggest a developmental and planned programme of education, training and rehabilitation with a stress on the family and the community. In the context of policies for children, the approach advocates a more basic and frontal attack on the causes which adversely affect the survival and growth of children. It also holds promise of greater emphasis on enabling mothers to provide better care to their children by providing them economic and educational opportunities. The responsibility for providing various services for different types of handicapped and destitute children will continue to be placed on voluntary agencies. The government is expected to support national institutions for various types of handicapped children in the development of experimental approaches to their rehabilitation and integration of their education with that of normal children.

The government is also expected to support voluntary effort through grants-in-aid and by strengthening research through training of workers. Implementation of the policy adopted during the Fourth Plan and reiterated in the National Policy statement regarding the promotion of institutional and non-institutional services for abandoned, neglected, orphan and homeless children through grants-in-aid to voluntary agencies has achieved slow but significant success during the last five years. By 1981-82, about 54,000 children had got benefit of children's homes and foster home care under the Central scheme of welfare of children in need of care and protection.

Nutrition programmes have received considerable momentum in the years following the adoption of National Policy for Children. By the end of the Fourth Plan, the coverage of beneficiaries under the Special Nutrition Programme was about 37 lakhs. By 1979-80, about 17 lakh beneficiaries were covered under this programme through nearly 60,000 feeding centres. Under the mid-day meals programme,

as against 120 lakh school children covered by the end of the Fourth Plan, mainly with the food assistance from CARE, the number estimated to be covered by the end of the Fifth Plan was about 130 lakhs. The Balwadi Nutrition Programme, which was introduced in 1970-71, covered about 23 lakh children during the Fifth Plan. The prophylaxis against blindness due to vitamin 'A' deficiency programme covered about 25 lakh children by 1978 and the programme to prevent nutritional anaemia covered 16 lakh mothers and 14 lakh children.

As regards inclusion of primary health care as a basic objective of national policy, some progress has been made since the end of the Fourth Plan, although much ground remains to be covered. Some of the specific targets regarding establishment of health infrastructure and related manpower may be relevant in this connection as indications of the direction of development. The objective is to provide one sub-centre for every 5,000 population and one primary health centre for every 50,000 population, one community health volunteer and one *dai* each for every village or 1,000 population. On 31 March 1980, there were 5,499 primary health centres and 49,323 sub-centres. By December 1980, 1,56,691 community health volunteers were trained as against 5,80,000 to be trained by 1986. The number of trained *daïs* which was 45,000 by 1974 rose to 79,193 in December 1980. Under immunization schemes, targets achieved by January 1981 in respect to DPT of infants and DT were 50 lakhs and 35 lakhs, as against 195 lakhs and 160 lakhs expected to be covered by 1982-83. The slow progress of immunization highlights the need for a strong motivational effort to generate greater public awareness of this programme and, equally important, problems of inadequate health manpower and logistic support.

In the field of education, the goal of ensuring equality of educational opportunities led to considerable emphasis during the Fifth Plan period through expanding the coverage of primary education especially for children from disadvantaged groups, scheduled tribes and

scheduled castes and population in backward rural areas and urban slums. A start has also been made with nonformal and continuation education for those children who have never been enrolled in schools or have dropped out before completing the primary stage. The school enrolment of children between 6 and 11 years of age in 1979-80 was about 82.0 per cent of the total population of that age group. The enrolment of children between 11 and 14 years rose from 35.6 per cent in 1973-74 to 38.4 per cent in 1979-80. Furthermore, considerable stress is being put on enrolment of girls, qualitative improvement in elementary education, curriculum development and linking students and teachers with development programmes in their communities through special schemes which have been introduced.

RETROSPECTS AND PROSPECTS

A critical review of the National Policy for Children in India has to be made in the context of the particular demographic, socio-economic and political situation in the country which has important implications. In 1981, the population of children below 14 years was estimated to be over 27 crores, the second largest in the world, constituting about two-fifths of the total population of the country. About 80 per cent of India's children live in rural and tribal areas. As many as 1,60,000 villages have no access to the most elementary systems of safe water supply, sewerage and drainage.

One of the early steps the National Children's Board has taken is to indicate categories of children who should receive priority attention. Since nearly 12.6 crore children, according to 1977 estimates, were expected to be living in families below the poverty line, the groups suggested for priority attention are likely to be too numerous to be served effectively in view of the limited resources available and the undeveloped infrastructure for delivery of services in the impoverished areas. It may therefore be expedient and desirable to define the groups which can be effectively served with the present

resources and accept more modest goals. This means an honest acknowledgement that at present children in certain pockets of poverty and extreme deprivation and those in remote inaccessible areas may not be adequately served. Furthermore, a clear and enlightened policy on limitation of family size and related measures to decrease infant mortality and morbidity and ensuring the health of children and mothers would seem to be an essential prerequisite for the success of other measures for the well-being of children.

A formidable task for the National Children's Board is to decide what type of programmes should be initiated and sponsored by the Centre and which ones should be left to the States. There is increasing pressure from the States for obtaining a larger proportion of the total allocation in the State sector and a greater discretion to the States to decide and develop programmes in relation to their own priorities. At the same time there is a danger of the relatively backward States neglecting programmes for children because of their low priority. The Centre has so far tended to sponsor new programmes through the demonstration stage and transfer them to States subsequently. If the demonstration value of the programmes is to be fully realised, there is a need to provide not merely financial but technical support to some States. For instance, the north-eastern region has been lagging far behind other States and requires special measures, including infrastructural development. There is reason to consider whether the prevalent ICDS pattern militates against the strong tradition of self-reliance among tribal communities. The Central Government's support must be characterised by imagination and flexibility in order to encourage suitable adaptations of national models consistent with the strong community traditions of tribal populations.

In view of the magnitude of the needs of children in various categories and the scarcity of resources, there is need for the government to play a more active role in coordinating the efforts of government and voluntary agencies. The pyramid model suggested by Kulkarni⁴

recommends creation of a base of minimum basic services for all children and specialised services at progressively higher levels of the pyramid, with models of excellence to be promoted by government to demonstrate a high quality of services. This is an interesting approach provided the models are so designed that their replicability depends more on human will and less on material resources.

A review of the development of policy for children, as reflected in various laws, has revealed the fragmentation and inconsistencies in their provisions and drawbacks in their implementation. There is need to sponsor a comprehensive study of the legislation pertaining to children. Such a study will facilitate development of a comprehensive code for dealing with children on the basis of their needs rather than on the basis of the legal categories in which they happen to be placed. This effort will have to be complemented by careful and thorough understanding of the total situation responsible for creating problems of various kinds. It is significant to note that in many western countries labour laws relating to children could be implemented effectively only when supported by compulsory and free education and public family assistance for the care of dependent children. In India, legislation restraining child marriage can be effective only when educational and employment opportunities for women are made more adequate.

One of the important tasks for the National Policy for Children is to provide a comprehensive framework of clearly defined objectives indicating long, medium and short-term goals so that individual and specific programmes having a bearing on children can be tested for their consistency and effectiveness and frequent shifts avoided. The development of social indicators to assess accurately the impact of programmes will be extremely crucial in this task. This onerous responsibility requires that the National Children's Board has access to the best available expertise and insights in various fields, and a professionally competent secretariat to provide reliable and

up-to-date information and monitoring support. The Board can benefit from policy-oriented research and documentation on a number of aspects such as case studies on organisation and administration of programmes for children, studies of logistics and delivery systems for various services, studies of effects of certain aspects of social change on the status of children, etc. In our situation where the needs for services are overwhelming and resources available are limited, the Board will require precise information and cost-benefit analyses of the impact of various combinations of measures on the well-being of children. For instance, it would be worthwhile to test which combinations of services such as immunization, protected drinking water, supplementary feeding, education of mothers, sanitary latrines, etc., would optimize impact on reduction of child mortality and morbidity.

Another important aspect of the National Policy for Children refers to the respective roles of government and voluntary agencies. Starting from the First Plan which entrusted major responsibility for children's services to voluntary agencies, the current policy is for the government to assume responsibility for large and extensive programmes of basic services, while specialized services for various categories of handicapped children are left to voluntary agencies. While this division is generally quite appropriate in the context of available resources, it is important to recognise that in some States voluntary agencies have not developed at all and government must assume additional tasks. It is also necessary to monitor the implementation of massive government programmes to safeguard against their lapsing into completely unimaginative and wasteful routines. A genuine partnership based on respect and mutual trust has yet to be developed between government and voluntary agencies.

The role of international and bilateral aid agencies must also be defined by the National Policy. In no case should external assistance be allowed to deflect national objectives and

distort priorities International assistance must be deployed to enhance the quality and effectiveness of national programmes, to test innovative and experimental approaches, and to focus attention on crucial programmes which have a low priority in national planning International assistance should not be permitted to be used as a budgetary subsidy because this would tend to foster dependency on such aid

A crucial aspect of the National Policy for Children relates to manpower development The new trends in programming require large cadres of workers possessing knowledge and skills which are multi-sectoral and which enable wide and intelligent community participation The National Children's Board can make a valuable contribution towards the development of a systematic, perspective plan for training of workers Such a plan should ensure that professionally competent staffs are available at State level to provide purposeful leadership

Last, but not the least, the National Policy for Children must be dynamic and adapt itself to changing situations and help in anticipating possible consequences of social change Its relationship to policies in other sectors such as nutrition, health, family planning, education, employment, urbanization, etc, must be clearly understood, so that it can be realistic and supportive It must effectively interpret the implications of development of children for the total national development This presupposes that a policy for children must go far beyond a sentimental appeal and accept objective factual reasoning as its informing principle

SINDHU V. PHADKE

NOTES

- 1 Jyotsna Shah, "Welfare of Children Under Indian Laws" in K D Gangrade (ed) *Social Legislation in India*, Vol II, Concept Publishing Company, Delhi, 1978, pp 94-118 Gujarat is probably one of the exceptional States which has appointed six Child Marriage Prevention Officers with powers to prosecute offenders

- 2 Malabika Patnaik, "Child Labour in India Size and Occupational Distribution" in T N Chaturvedi (ed), *Administration for Child Welfare*, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, 1979, pp 136-145 Although the number of child workers according to 1971 Census is estimated to be 107 lakhs, this is generally believed to be a serious underestimate due to changes in census definitions and absence of prescribed minimum age in unorganised occupations such as agriculture which employs 78.75 per cent of the total number Eighty per cent of children of migrants are workers
- 3 Government of India, *Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85)*, Planning Commission, 1981
- 4 P D Kulkarni, "Shifts Necessary in Policies and Organisation", paper presented at the *Seminar on Children's Services in the Eighties*, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay, June 1979
- 5 Mandakini Khandekar, "Social Policy and Social Indicators", paper presented to the *Pre-Conference Working Party*, Indian Council of Social Welfare, Bombay, 12-15 October 1971

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

"The nation's children are a supremely important asset Their nurture and solicitude are our responsibility Children's programme should find a prominent part in our national plans for the development of human resources, so that our children grow up to robust citizens physically fit, mentally alert and morally healthy, endowed with the skills and motivations needed by the society"¹ This preamble of the National Policy for Children adopted by the Government of India in August 1974 sums up the current national awareness and recognition of the paramount importance of investment in child welfare for ensuring proper environment and facilities for all the children in the country to grow and develop into useful citizens of tomorrow

Traditionally, child care was primarily the responsibility of the family in India The institution of joint family gave the basic necessities of life and security to the children

and provided for their growth and development. Mothers, grandmothers and other elders were repositories of knowledge about child rearing and child development. Concepts of child rearing practices were also written in the ancient Indian *Grihyasutras*. However, with growing urbanization, industrialisation, spread of education, individualism and other factors, the responsibilities towards kin members other than those of the immediate family began to be accepted with a lesser degree of willingness. The necessity for care of certain categories of children (orphans, abandoned children, etc.) by the community thus began to be felt.

The latter half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century which was characterised by intense activity for social reform also saw the growth of voluntary agencies for the welfare of children. Among the earliest child welfare organisations were Balkan-Ji-Barī, founded in 1926, Children's Aid Society founded in 1927, Kishore Dal in 1942 in Bihar, and Nanhi Duniya in 1946 in Uttar Pradesh.

Among the legislative efforts for the welfare of the children, the Apprentices Act of 1850 and the Reformatory Schools Act of 1876 as amended in 1897 were the earliest.

When India attained independence, the founding fathers, realising the need of protecting the rights of the children of the nation on whom the future of the country depends, made certain constructive safeguards. The Constitution of India in Article 24 under Fundamental Rights and Articles 39 and 45 under the Directive Principles, outlined the nation's duties and responsibilities towards children. The Constitutional directives provide for the protection of children against exploitation and moral and material abandonment, provision of free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years, and prohibition of employment of children below 14 years in factories, mines or in any other hazardous employment. Article 15 of the Fundamental

Rights enjoins that the State may make special provisions for children.

MALNUTRITION

According to the 1971 Census, the child population in India in the age-group of 0-14 years was about 23 crores which constituted 42 per cent of the total population. Children of 0-6 years, who are considered in the vulnerable age-group, numbered about 11.5 crores that was about 21 per cent of the total population. The number of children of 0-14 years in 1981 is estimated to be about 28.7 crores. The estimate of malnutrition is 15 to 20 per cent of the population according to Dr P V Sukhatme (of the Maharashtra Association for Cultivation of Science) whereas estimates based on the concept of the poverty line put it at 49 per cent. In the study on *Poverty of India*, V M Dandekar and N Rath estimated in 1971 that one-third of the rural population and one-half of the urban population lives on inadequate dietary intakes (against 2,500 k calories considered as an adequate daily allowance). While malnutrition is, thus, widespread in the country, the major problems can be classified as (i) protein energy malnutrition among pre-school children, (ii) vitamin 'A' deficiency among pre-school and school children, and (iii) iron deficiency anaemia among school children, young girls, pregnant women and nursing mothers.

Protein energy malnutrition prevailing among pre-school children is a serious problem. Kwashiorkor and marasmus are the two main clinical forms of severe protein and energy deficiencies respectively. About 80 per cent of the children are estimated to suffer from varying grades of growth retardation. The average Indian child of 1 to 5 years takes only 810 k calories per day whereas the ICMR recommended allowance is of 1,200 k calories. Similarly, the average pregnant woman and nursing mother consume 1,400 to 1,500 k calories as against the ICMR recommended allowance of 2,500 to 2,900 k calories per day.

Only 14.3 per cent of Indian children between 1 and 4 years of age in 1978 were

classified as of normal nutritional status (according to Gomez classification), 42.4 per cent and 34.9 per cent suffered from mild and moderate forms of malnutrition respectively and the rest (8.4 per cent) were severely malnourished. According to classification by 'type of malnutrition', 30.2 per cent were normal, 40.2 per cent experienced chronic malnutrition and were 'nutritional dwarfs', 4.4 per cent suffered from acute malnutrition and nearly a fourth of the total number of children were afflicted with both acute and chronic malnutrition.³

Infant mortality rates in the country have been high and continue to be so. In 1947, 160 out of 1,000 infants died before attaining the age of one year. In 1978, the infant mortality rate was 125. Available data reveal that nearly 60 per cent of the infant deaths occur within the first month after birth (neo-natal stage). Maternal malnutrition is a major contributory factor in the premature birth of an infant. It has been observed that about 36 per cent of the infant deaths are due to prematurity.

The effects of malnutrition are more severe among children in the age group of 0-3 years. Apart from the direct effects, malnutrition lowers the capacity to withstand diseases and reduces the body's resistance to infections. The physical and mental damage on the children are often irreversible. In its wider perspective, the malnutrition problem is one of human wastage amounting to about 125 deaths per thousand live births before the completion of one year, as mentioned earlier. Many survive at physically marginal levels with lessened capacity for productivity.

It is estimated that about 22 per cent of the school-going children of 6 years and above show one or more signs of malnutritional deficiency. A much higher proportion of school-going children from low socio-economic groups (56 per cent) show signs of moderate protein calorie malnutrition, while 15 per cent show severe malnutrition, reflected in sub-standard body weights. About 2.5 million children in India are threatened by blindness in early childhood because their diet lacks vitamin

'A'. Lack of the vitamin is also the cause of night blindness that affects about 10 to 15 per cent of all children. The peak incidence of such blindness is in the 1-5 years age group.⁴

HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE

Data available⁵ on causes of infant (0-1 year) and child (1-4 years) deaths show that "causes peculiar to infancy" account for about 60 per cent of infant deaths. Pneumonia and bronchitis account for over 80 per cent of infant deaths due to respiratory disorders. Typhoid and malaria are associated with half of the deaths under the category of 'fever'. Tetanus and digestive disorders like gastroenteritis each cause about three to four per cent of the total infant deaths. Among the 1-4 years age group, mortality is specially related to 'fevers', respiratory, digestive and parasitic diseases. These are aggravated by poor environmental sanitation, overcrowded living conditions and malnutrition. Eye ailments are also common, particularly among school-going children. Water-borne and water-related diseases are also leading killers of infants and children.

Existing maternal and child health services reach only a small proportion of women and children. About 80 per cent of the Indian population lives in rural and tribal areas, but only 30 per cent of the hospital beds and 20 per cent of the doctors in the country are available in these areas. The number of hospital beds for children—about 9,300—are barely 50 per cent of the minimum requirement and the country has only 25 children's hospitals and 424 paediatric wards to meet the needs of nearly 250 million children.⁶ Medical care for the rural population is provided by government-run Primary Health Centres (PHC). Maternity and child health services at the PHCs normally include ante-natal, delivery and post-natal care including diet supplementation of pregnant women and nursing mothers and growing children, mother craft and hygiene, surveillance of children under 5 years of age, health education, besides conventional obstetric, gynaecological and

paediatric services In 1981-82, there were 5,686 PHCs and 58,975 sub-centres functioning in the country⁷ Each PHC normally served a population of 80,000 to one lakh in a Community Development Block and each sub-centre of the PHC catered to a population of about 10,000 The PHC normally had two doctors, 3 to 4 health inspectors, two lady health visitors/public health assistants, 10 auxiliary nurses/midwives and 8 basic health workers In the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), under the minimum needs programme, it is proposed to strengthen the rural health infrastructure in order to achieve the objective of Health-for-All by 2,000 A D The norms envisaged are (i) one Primary Health Centre (PHC) for 30,000 population in the plains and 20,000 in hill and tribal areas No change in staffing pattern, (ii) one sub-centre for 5,000 population in the plains and 2,000 in hilly and tribal areas, (iii) one Community Health Centre (CHC) for the population of one lakh or one Community Development Block, with 30 beds and specialised medical care services in gynaecology, paediatrics, surgery and medicine, and (iv) one community health volunteer for every village or a population of 1,000, chosen by the community to form the base unit

According to the Annual Report (1981-82) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the number of PHCs and sub-centres functioning in 1981-82 were 5,686 and 58,975 respectively Although a tremendous investment had been made over the past three decades in the health infrastructure, the health and medical services available at present have not reached the optimum level.

EDUCATION

Though Article 45 of the Directive Principles of Indian Constitution enjoins that the State shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years, the progress of children's education has been slow in general and uneven between rural and urban areas and between

boys and girls In the year 1979-80, the enrolment at the primary stage was 709.50 lakhs or 83.6 per cent of the children in the age-group of 6-11 years, it was 194.83 lakhs at the middle stage or 40.2 per cent of the 11-14 age-group population The hard core of non-enrolled children, particularly at the primary stage, belonged to the weaker sections including scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, agricultural labourers and slum-dwellers More than two-thirds of the non-enrolled children were girls⁸ Drop-out is a major problem in children's education in the country Out of every 100 children who enter class I, less than half complete Class V and only 24 Class VIII The drop-out rate of girls is much higher, that is about 70 per cent between Class I and V

Pre-school education is not yet recognised as part of the free and compulsory education covered under the Directive Principles of the Constitution The National Policy on Education also avoided discussion of the need to provide early childhood education However, it is estimated that approximately 45 lakh children are being offered one kind of pre-primary programme or the other

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Accurate statistics on the nature and magnitude of different categories of the handicapped are not available The National Sample Survey Organisation made two attempts in 1960-61 and 1973-74 to collect the requisite data But these attempts were largely unsuccessful due to inadequately trained personnel and non-availability of acceptable definitions The National Sample Survey Organisation conducted a survey of the handicapped in 1981 which provides data reflecting the dimensions of the problem Services and facilities for education, training and rehabilitation of handicapped children are grossly inadequate

DEPRIVED CHILDREN

Assuming that about 49 per cent of Indian population is living below poverty line, a very

large number of children are in varying degrees of deprivation and need social and welfare services very urgently

WORKING CHILDREN

Reliable data on the number of children pushed into the labour force by economic pressures and other reasons are not available. The 1971 Census listed about 1 crore children as workers but other estimates indicate that the total child labour force may be as high as 3 crores. There are as many as thirteen Acts to provide legal protection to children in various occupations. As the majority of the children are employed in the unorganised sector, they are not effectively covered by these protective legislation.

DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

There were no major programmes for children at the Central level during the first few years after independence in 1947, except those undertaken by some Ministries. The Ministry of Railways provided scholarships to children of its employees for prosecution of technical education and vocational training. Assistance to the children of workers in mica mines were available from the Mica Mines Labour Welfare Fund. The Coal Mines and Labour Welfare Fund Act of 1917 and the Factories Act 1948 provided for setting up of creches for children whose mothers worked in mines and factories employing more than 50 women.

With the advent of the era of planning in India and the setting up of the Planning Commission in 1951, child welfare started receiving greater attention. The First Five Year Plan postulated that "considering the number involved, the needs of children shall receive much greater attention than is commonly given to them". In the First Plan (1951-56), the Government came forward to assist voluntary organisations with necessary finance and technical assistance through the Central Social Welfare Board which was set up for the purpose under the Ministry of Education in 1953. Out of an allocation of Rs 4 crores the Central Social Welfare Board with its

counterparts in the States and Union Territories provided grants-in-aid to the tune of Rs 29.90 lakhs to about 592 voluntary organisations rendering welfare services for children. Besides, in 1954, the Board started welfare extension projects in rural areas where no voluntary organisations existed. The main activities promoted were organisation of *Balwadis*, creches, maternity and child health centres, medical aid, mid-day meals, recreational and cultural programmes, etc. During the Second Plan (1956-61) the Central Social Welfare Board continued these programmes. In order to avoid duplication of efforts in organising programmes for women and children in rural areas by the Board and the Department of Community Development, it was decided that in future Welfare Extension Projects would be started in Community Development Blocks under the charge of Central Social Welfare Board. The Board also introduced two new schemes for children namely, welfare extension projects (urban) and holiday homes.

The Central and State Governments also stepped in to share the responsibility of implementing welfare programmes and State Governments were encouraged to implement them in their respective States with necessary financial support from the Central Government. These programmes were divided into two categories, namely, 'care' and 'after-care' programmes. Under the former were included schemes for setting up of institutions under the Children Act—institutions for eradication of beggary, especially juvenile beggary, and vagrancy, as also organisation of probation services. The latter included setting up of reception centres/district shelters and institutions for persons discharged from correctional and non-correctional institutions. Special programmes were also undertaken for education, training and rehabilitation of physically handicapped children like the blind, the deaf and the dumb.

During the Third Plan (1961-66) a welcome new step was the involvement of State Governments and voluntary welfare organisations at

the planning stage. Programmes started during the First and Second Plans were continued. A new scheme of pre-vocational training programme for children was introduced during this period and training centres were attached to multi-purpose higher secondary or technical basic schools in rural and semi-urban areas. The programme of integrated child welfare demonstration projects was also started in the Third Plan period in different States and Union Territories, with financial support from the Centre, with a view to provide children upto the age of 16 years with opportunities to grow into healthy and useful citizens through well planned and integrated programmes.

During the years 1966-69, attention was primarily focused on the task of consolidation of programmes started earlier. An important step taken in 1967 was the introduction of the composite scheme of family and child welfare projects by converting the existing welfare extension projects (rural) and integrated child welfare demonstration projects.

In the Fourth Plan (1969-74) child welfare was accorded a high priority. The Central Social Welfare Board continued to give grants-in-aid to voluntary child welfare organisations for expansion, improvement and consolidation of existing welfare services and also for starting new services. The scheme of family and child welfare projects was continued and expanded. To tackle the problem of destitution especially among children, a scheme for starting welfare services for destitute children was included. The special nutrition programme which was started as crash programme in 1970-71 for the benefit of children in the age-group 0-3 years in slums and tribal areas was extended later to cover children in the age-group 0-6 and expectant and nursing mothers. A nutrition feeding programme for pre-school children was also implemented during the period through *Balwadis* run by voluntary organisations.

In the Fifth Plan (1974-79) child welfare was given a major thrust in terms of allocations and introduction of new schemes. The sectoral approach to the needs of children, the shifting

emphasis from one target group of children to another, the constant recasting of the form and content of a scheme as in the case of welfare extension projects into family and child welfare projects, the lack of proper coordination between government and voluntary organisations and among voluntary organisations themselves, all pointed to the fact that by and large planning for child welfare rested largely on the method of trial and error. Experience of the implementation of schemes in the field of child welfare in the past revealed that unless a programme of mutually reinforcing child care services including health care, immunisation, nutrition feeding, pre-school education and safe drinking water are provided in an integrated manner optimum benefits would not be forthcoming. It was observed that multiplicity of services had led to shrinking of benefits to the ultimate recipient. It was also felt that organisational and functional responsibility for delivering the services and monitoring information were not properly fixed on the functionaries of the agencies involved in programme implementation. Hence, a need was felt for integrated child care services rectifying these deficiencies and streamlining the system. Consequently a scheme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Projects was conceived and included in the Fifth Five Year Plan to be implemented under the social welfare sector.⁹ It aimed to provide a package of services consisting of supplementary nutrition, immunisation, health check up, referral services, nutrition and health education, and non-formal education to children in the age-group of 0-6 years, pregnant women and nursing mothers in rural, tribal and urban areas.¹⁰ As this scheme required considerable organisational and coordination efforts from the village to the central government level as well as training of personnel on a large scale, it was launched on 2 October 1975 on an experimental basis in 33 projects (17 rural, 12 tribal and 4 urban), with a view to testing the management efficiency and cost effectiveness. An information system

was evolved for monitoring the experimental projects through regular monthly feedback from each project. In accordance with the decision to subject these experimental projects to systematic evaluation, the Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission undertook in mid-1976 an assessment of the state of preparedness of these experimental projects followed by an evaluation study. In the meantime, in the light of interim reports, 67 additional projects were approved in the year 1978-79, 50 additional projects in 1979-80 and another 50 in 1980-81 and 100 in 1981-82, bringing the total number of ICDS Projects to 300. Of these, 165 were in the rural, 97 in the tribal and 38 in the urban areas. In 1982-83, 320 new projects were sanctioned.

At the time of the formulation of the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), it was proposed to expand the programme to reach a total of 600 projects. Its inclusion in the new 20-point programme has now raised the target to 1,000.

Available services for children who need care and protection were found to be inadequate. Therefore, to stimulate voluntary action in this direction, financial assistance was offered for providing institutional and non-institutional services to children in need of care and protection and to organise day care centres/creches for children of casual labourers and ailing mothers.

During this period the Central Bureau of Correctional Services was reorganised and renamed as the National Institute of Social Defence. The Institute is concerned with preventive, correctional and rehabilitative measures in various areas of social defence particularly in respect of children involved in juvenile vagrancy, delinquency and crime, probation, beggary, alcoholism, drug addiction, etc. Similarly, in the context of launching of the programme of Integrated Child Development Services, the Central Institute of Research and Training in Public Cooperation was reorganised and renamed as the National Institute of Public Cooperation

and Child Development in July 1975 with the addition of a division to look after the work relating to research and training in child development.

NATIONAL POLICY FOR CHILDREN

Another major development—considered something of a milestone—that took place during the Fifth Plan period was the adoption of the National Policy for Children, wherein it is stated that “it shall be the policy of the State to provide adequate services to children, both before and after and during the period of growth, to ensure their full physical, mental and social development. The State shall progressively increase the scope of such services so that within a reasonable time, all children in the country enjoy optimum conditions for their balanced growth.”¹¹ The policy statement also enlisted various measures to be adopted towards the attainment of these objectives. In formulating programmes in different sectors, it was stipulated that priority shall be given to programmes relating to (a) preventive and promotive aspects of child health, (b) nutrition for infants and children in the pre-school age alongwith nutrition for nursing and expectant mothers, (c) maintenance, education and training of orphan and destitute children, (d) creches and other facilities for the care of children of working and ailing mothers; and (e) care, education, training and rehabilitation of handicapped children.

As provided in the National Policy for Children, a National Children's Board was subsequently constituted on 3 December 1974 with the Prime Minister as the President. The National Children's Board approved in 1978 a proposal to set up a National Children's Fund at the Centre and similar funds at the State level. It is a standing Fund to be utilised by voluntary organisations for extending various child welfare services.

VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN CHILD WELFARE

It would almost be impossible to give any comprehensive account of the voluntary

agencies offering child welfare services in the country as their number is legion. They are spread all over the country and the types of services rendered are multifarious. Some of the well-known organisations in the field, particularly those functioning on a country-wide basis that may merit mention are the Indian Council for Child Welfare, the national organisations/associations catering to the welfare of the blind, the deaf and the dumb and the mentally retarded, the SOS children's villages, the mobile creche organisation, etc. Many religious groups run child welfare institutions such as orphanages, fondling homes and medical and supplementary feeding centres. There are also several voluntary organisations which mainly confine their activities to a State or a particular region. In the area of creation of awareness of the problem of the children, the contributions of voluntary organisations like the Indian Council of Social Welfare (erstwhile Indian Conference of Social Work), and the Indian Pediatric Society cannot be ignored. Similarly in the cultural and the non-formal educational field concerning children, the role of the Shanker's Weekly of India deserves recognition.

Some international organisations also assist child welfare programmes in the country by providing technical advice and supplying materials and equipment. Foremost among them are the UNICEF, WHO, ILO, WFP and CARE.

ADMINISTRATION OF CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMMES

At the Central level, child welfare is primarily the charge of the Ministry of Social Welfare. It is also the nodal Ministry for coordination of child welfare programmes. However, the field of child development is distributed among various other Ministries and departments. For example, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is in charge of maternity and child health services, family planning, immunisation and some elements of nutrition. Some nutrition programmes are implemented by the

Department of Food. Similarly, education is entrusted to the Ministry of Education, but care of pre-school children through *Balwadis*, their recreation, etc. are the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Welfare. Provision of safe drinking water, which is an essential supportive service for child welfare, is dealt with by the Ministry of Works and Housing.

Most of the subjects concerning child welfare and general social welfare are placed in the Concurrent/State List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India and therefore the States have substantial legislative and administrative powers as well as responsibilities in matters relating to child welfare.

There is little uniformity of administrative set up for child welfare programmes in the States and Union Territories. However, in most of the States general welfare, including welfare of the handicapped and nutrition programmes for children, come under the purview of the organisational set up described variously as Departments/Directorates of Social Welfare, Directorate of Welfare, Directorate of Women and Child Welfare, Directorate of Harijan and Social Welfare, Directorate of Tribal Welfare, Directorate of Community Development, whereas programmes relating to probation, juvenile delinquency, suppression of immoral traffic in girls, beggary, vagrancy are in some States under Home Department, Police Department or Jail Department.

Coordination between the various departments dealing with the different aspects of child welfare as well as coordination within the same department at various levels is a major problem faced both by the Central and State Governments. Though Coordination Committees or Advisory Committees of different hues and composition are set up both at the Central and State levels for particular programmes (for example ICDS) or for certain fields like social defence, effective coordination is not achieved. This drawback needs to be remedied.

OUTLAYS ON CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

There is difficulty in computing the outlays exclusively on child welfare services as they are distributed over different sectors/Ministries, such as Ministries of Social Welfare, Education, Health and Family Welfare, Food, Rural Development, Works & Housing, and Information and Broadcasting as also in many cases combined with or common to other target groups as in programmes for women and child welfare, welfare of the handicapped, maternity and child health, nutrition, drinking water supply, etc. Further, they are spread over the Centre and States and under plan and non-plan heads of account. Even under plan, the programmes are grouped as Central, Centrally sponsored and State sector schemes. Central schemes are those directly financed and implemented by the Central Government in the broad national interest. Centrally sponsored schemes are initiated by the Centre in consultation with the State Governments and implemented through State Governments. The responsibility of financing such schemes after the particular plan period devolves on the States. This is technically termed as committed expenditure. State sector schemes or programmes are those formulated and implemented by State Governments from out of plan funds. There are other schemes of State Governments financed out of their own non-plan funds.

Some of the major programmes of child welfare are under the social welfare sector. Though child welfare programmes are being given increasing priority under social welfare, the social welfare sector as such enjoys only a low priority in the national plan so far as outlays are concerned. While there has been some increase in the financial allocations to social welfare over the past five year plans from Rs 4 crores in the First Plan to Rs 86.13 crores in the Fifth Plan and Rs 272 crores in the Sixth Plan, the provisions have not increased substantially in terms of percentage to the total outlay. The percentage of outlay for social welfare to total plan outlay was 0.17 in the First Plan. This increased to 0.40 and 0.41 in the

Second and Third Plans respectively, but decreased to 0.26 and 0.22 in the Fourth and Fifth Plans. In the Sixth Plan the allocation for social welfare is 0.28 percent. In the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), in terms of actual outlay, Rs 31.13 crores (36 percent) were earmarked for child welfare programmes out of the total allocation of Rs 86.13 crores for social welfare sector, besides other programmes benefitting, among others, children as well. In the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), child welfare programmes were given the highest priority and commensurate allocations. Integrated Child Development Services is the most important programme under social welfare sector in the Sixth Plan, both priority and allocation-wise, for which a provision of Rs. 45 crores had originally been made, keeping in view the target of 600 Projects. Since the target now has been revised to 1,000 Projects, the allocation is also being proposed to be enhanced. Services for children in need of care and protection is another programme in the Sixth Plan with a provision of Rs 5.75 crores. Some of the other programmes for children in the Sixth Plan for which provisions have been made are creche/day-care centres for children of working mothers, welfare of destitute women and children, and integrated education of the physically handicapped. The Working Group on Education and Culture for Sixth Plan (1980-85) recommended setting up of pre-school education centres and the highest priority for universalisation of elementary education which already forms an essential component of the minimum needs programme.

MAIN FEATURES AND TRENDS

The foregoing account of the growth of child welfare programmes in the country clearly shows that there has been increasing awareness, both at the governmental and public level during the past three decades after independence, about the need for human resource development in the interest of the future of the nation and that it can be achieved only if all children are properly looked after.

particularly during the first six years which is the most vulnerable stage of their life. It has also been recognised that if health and nutrition are neglected in the first few years of life, the learning capacity of the child is likely to be impaired. It is also widely accepted that more than three-fourths of mental development takes place by the age of eight years. Socialisation is another aspect of the growth of child's personality that requires proper handling. Social values, attitudes, habits which endure through life are mostly formed in early childhood. On all these counts there has been general agreement that adequate services are to be provided for children in their early years. Various committees, study groups and seminars, both under government and non-official auspices, such as the Committee for the Preparation of a Programme for Children (1968), the Study Group on the Development of the Pre-school Child (1972), the eight Study Teams constituted by Planning Commission (1972) and the Seminar on Pre-School Child (1970) have highlighted these aspects of child development. The Education Commission (1964-66) also recognised the educational importance of the 3-6 years stage in the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development and noted that children who had been to a pre-school made greater progress at the primary stage and that rates of wastage and stagnation were lower in such a group.

The government on their part have taken note of all these and accepted in principle the nation's responsibility towards its children. The adoption of the National Policy for Children (1974) was a concrete step. The National Health Policy (1979) recognised the importance of health services for the pre-school child.

Even though the problems have been recognised and identified, the programmes have not kept pace with their magnitude or intensity, on account of constraints of funds, administrative infrastructure and personnel. However, during the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) there have been major developments

in the field of child welfare. An integrated approach was developed in child welfare schemes. Besides concentrating on the health, nutrition and education of the children, the requirements of nutrition, maternity and health care of pregnant and nursing mothers, and health and nutrition education of women in general, have been assigned due importance within a perspective. Family-based programmes with emphasis on preventive and developmental than ameliorative services were formulated. The Integrated Child Development Services Projects launched by the Ministry of Social Welfare in cooperation with the State Governments was a major step in this direction. In the health sector efforts to integrate maternal and child health, family planning and nutrition services into primary health care were accelerated. Programmes for handicapped children and children in need of care were also expanded. Day care centres and creches were also organised on a larger scale. The declaration of the year 1979 as International Year of the Child gave a fillip to child welfare programmes, as India actively participated in its observance, involving all the Ministries concerned with child welfare schemes at the Centre and also the States. In the wake of United Nations proclaiming the year 1981 as the International Year of the Disabled Persons (ITDP), programmes for advocacy and creating awareness were undertaken and some new schemes launched. Voluntary organisations have also been contributing their mite and sharing the responsibility in organising and implementing programmes for the welfare of children.

While it is gratifying that the movement is going in the right direction and a national consciousness has been generated to provide all possible assistance and facilities to children, particularly those from the weaker sections of society, the efforts have touched only a fringe of the problem as yet. A majority of children in India are still under-privileged and live in environments that hamper development. Economically the families live at subsistence level. Mortality and morbidity rates are high in

the vulnerable 0-6 age group. Parents being uneducated and poor stick on to old and traditional norms of child rearing practices and treatment of diseases. Limited health care and educational facilities that exist do not benefit or are not availed of by the majority of families, particularly among the weaker sections

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES AND PROGRAMMES

Poverty of the masses is the basic cause of many of the problems afflicting our society and that has to be tackled on the general plane through family-based poverty alleviation measures. Children being a segment of the society would evidently benefit from such measures. Even so, children need to be given special attention as they require certain facilities in their early childhood for proper growth and development which only can ensure the improvement of the quality of life of the future generation

The problems of child welfare are multi-dimensional and therefore require a multi-pronged approach with a high degree of coordination and integration to produce tangible results. While the immediate objective of some of the programmes has to be ameliorative or curative, more emphasis is to be given to preventive and developmental aspects to obtain lasting results in terms of improvement of human resources. By and large, this has been the trend in the formulation of programmes for the welfare of children in the country in recent years. However, a reiteration of some of these concepts may not be out of place

Programmes ought to be age specific, taking into consideration the needs of the different stages like infancy (0-1 and 1-3 years), pre-school (3-6 years), primary school stage (6 to about 10 years) and above primary. Appropriate services are to be developed for the different categories of children like the normal, the handicapped, the destitute, taking the family as the unit of development and for provision of services. The involvement of both

the parents is necessary for any programme to be successful. The programmes should also suit the different socio-economic, cultural and religious groups, giving priority to the needs of weaker sections. In a vast country like India, geographical factors such as urban, rural and tribal areas, and regional variation in traditional habits, beliefs and practices of the community are to be taken into account. The nature of programmes should also have a relation to the level of development—educational, social, cultural as well as economic—already reached by the community in the different regions or areas. In short, no rigid schemes for the country as a whole can be drawn up and successfully implemented. It has to be flexible in terms of components as well as organisation

The major problems relating to children in India continue to be in the areas of nutrition, health care and education. But to make any dent on them, it would not be sufficient to provide services in these areas to children exclusively, but composite programmes covering pregnant women and nursing mothers would be necessary. In fact the starting point is the health and nutrition status of pregnant women, followed by pre-natal and post-natal maternity care and health care, and immunisation and nutrition of the child and the mother during the ensuing stages. In this context health and nutrition education and family planning assume importance. The next stage relates to pre-school education of children followed by regular school education. While planning services, the needs of normal children, 'problem' children as well as disabled children, who need special treatment, are to be taken care of.

The interests of children are to be safeguarded by provision of services and by protective measures. There are a number of well-conceived existing programmes and legislative Acts in favour of children but the lacuna is in their implementation. The loopholes in existing legislation also need to be plugged

Child welfare programmes are run by the government both Central and State, by voluntary organisations aided by the government, and by voluntary agencies on their own. The programmes, such as supplementary nutrition, education, health care, etc. are spread over several Ministries/Departments. Though Coordination Committees consisting of representatives of Ministries/Departments and non-officials are set up, in actual practice they have limited effectiveness, and the programmes suffer. Similarly there is at times lack of coordination between the Central and State Governments in the matter of child welfare programmes. Coordination between the government and the voluntary organisations and among voluntary organisations themselves leaves much to be desired.

To recapitulate, child welfare schemes under government auspices at the Centre and in the States are now administered by different Ministries/Departments. The multiplicity of Departments involved and the lack of proper coordination among them have reduced the impact of this programme. Considering the importance of child development in a time perspective and the constraints of financial inputs on account of the present state of economy of the country, the effort should be to obtain maximum return from whatever investments are being made. This would be possible only if duplication is avoided and an integrated administrative system is evolved. In order to streamline child welfare services, it is suggested that the current schemes spread under various agencies are integrated and brought under a separate new Ministry of Child Welfare and Development at the Centre and corresponding Ministries/Departments in the States, with a vertical flow of finance and administrative control. This Ministry should be responsible for looking after all the aspects of child development such as health, nutrition, education, protective legislation and their enforcement, etc. In the process, it has to cover pregnant women and nursing mothers also. A massive family education programme

will also have to be conducted by this Ministry. The process of evolution of this structure can be started by initially identifying the programmes concerning children under each Ministry/Department and bringing them under one cell in each of them. Thereafter these cells could be amalgamated under one Ministry cutting out duplication.

Child welfare programmes in the voluntary sector also need rationalisation and integration with governmental programmes for mutual supplementation and reinforcement. It may also be worthwhile to bring about uniformity in the quality of services offered by different voluntary agencies. The weakness that has often been highlighted is that welfare programmes and institutions are, by and large, concentrated in urban or semi-urban areas. Voluntary agencies, with proper and adequate governmental assistance, can help in the dispersal of welfare services to the rural areas. In order to bring about this rationalisation, it may be necessary in the first instance to organise all the voluntary agencies working in the field of child welfare into a Federation. Initiative in this regard can be taken by a national organisation like the Indian Council for Child Welfare or by the Central Social Welfare Board. This Federation can maintain liaison with the proposed Ministry of Child Welfare and Development.

Child development has to be given a higher priority in the national plan. Its present status as a part of another residuary sector like social welfare has to be raised. Child welfare and development should be accorded the status of a separate sector and increased allocations made under a separate head both in the Central and State plans.

To sum up, considerable step-up in financial inputs, streamlining of organisation and administration, and active community involvement are required in the coming years to improve the status of the children in the country which undoubtedly is one of our proclaimed national goals.

NOTES

- 1 *National Policy for Children*, Government of India, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Department of Social Welfare, New Delhi, January 1975, p. 1.
- 2 *Report of the Task Force on Nutrition Policy, Planning and Implementation for the Sixth Plan (1980-85)*, Government of India, September 1980.
- 3 *Report of the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau*, National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad
- 4 *The Child in India 1979*, (Abstracts), Government of India, Department of Social Welfare
- 5 *Causes of Death, 1974*, Vital Statistics Division, Registrar General of India, New Delhi, 1978, p. 49
- 6 *The Child in India . 1979*, *op cit*
- 7 *Annual Report 1980-81*, Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi, p. 5
- 8 *Annual Report 1980-81*, Government of India, Ministry of Education and Culture, p. 4.
- 9 *Programme of Integrated Child Care Services*, Government of India, Planning Commission, 1972
- 10 *Integrated Child Development Services Scheme*, Government of India, Department of Social Welfare, 1975.
11. *National Policy for Children*, *op cit*.

COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

In the context of social work, the term 'community organisation' has several meanings. This has caused much confusion in the minds of students, academicians and practitioners. Arthur Dunham in 1958 maintained that the term, though not entirely

satisfactory, seemed to be firmly fixed in history, literature and practice.¹

According to Lurie the term is used as follows: (i) as referring to a structure or stage of development as in the 'organised' and 'unorganised' community; (ii) a field of practice such as 'planning social welfare services', 'federated fund raising', 'national service agencies', and (iii) as a method, 'a way of working on an orderly conscious basis to affect defined and desired objectives and goals.'² In this article, community organisation is considered as a method of social work.

USAGE OF THE TERM

The term 'community organisation' was used in the United States before World War I. It has been taught as a professional practice in American schools of social work since 1940, and in Indian schools of social work since the 50's. However, the Council on Social Work Education (USA) recognized it as a field of specialization only since 1962.

EARLY HISTORY

The first efforts at community organisation for social welfare were initiated in the United Kingdom during the nineteenth century to overcome the problem of acute poverty which led to beggary.³ Thus the London Society for Organizing Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicancy was formed. Its functions were to organise the poor, collect funds to meet their basic needs and enable them to lead moral lives through education and thus assimilate them into English society.

The settlement house movement originated in England during 1880. Such houses catered to the needs of rural poor who flocked into the cities. Professors and students left their homes in better class neighbourhoods and lived in areas inhabited by the working class. They identified with the poor and became their spokesmen. They paid attention to the physical and social aspects of slum living.

These two movements—organising charity and serving neighbourhoods through settlement houses—had their impact in the United States which maintained close links with England. Thus in 1880, the Charity Organisation Society sprang up in the U.S.A. This was the first attempt in the U.S.A. to put rational order in the area of charity and relief. The chaos in the efforts to combat social problems created by the economic depression of 1873 and the rapid movement of the rural poor into urban areas due to industrialization called for coordination to prevent indiscriminate charity, fraud and duplication.

The settlement movement which reached the U.S.A. around 1886 was neighbourhood based and catered to poor immigrants from Europe. In addition, the leadership of this movement engaged in social action resulting in reform and social legislation. Thus they tried to change society in order to meet the needs of the people.

The early part of the twentieth century saw the birth of community councils in the U.S.A. These functioned to increase efficiency, encourage specialization, set standards for service and provide leadership to member agencies for joint planning. Later, World War I gave rise to war chests in many communities to promote central fund raising, coordination of services and control of spending. Most community organisation practitioners during this period were employed in community councils and chests. Thus community organisation during this period was looked upon as working with member agencies and not directly with communities. Due to the dominance of this type of practitioners in community organisation, the method was equated with coordination, raising standards of services, collecting and distributing funds and supervising spending during the 50's and early 60's.

Gradually, welfare responsibilities shifted from voluntary effort to public welfare departments of government. This retarded the use of community organisation to some extent

since counselling, health and recreation were the only areas on which voluntary effort could concentrate. The wider use of community organisation was further restricted due to the preoccupation of the social work profession with casework practice. However, urban renewal projects and programmes and the war on poverty of the 60's again completed the circle. Practitioners again focused attention on people in neighbourhoods and communities giving direct service to them.

EVOLUTION OF COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

The growth of community organisation may be traced in different ways. Professor Arthur Dunham outlined the development chronologically pointing out the landmarks reached as a result of the use of the community organisation method.⁴ Violet Sieder traced the development according to the goals set up and the corresponding methods devised to achieve these goals.⁵ Yet another approach was the development of community organisation in the light of the concepts clarified periodically by practitioners and educators in social welfare as related to the community. This was done to some extent by Sieder.⁶

The last approach, namely, the development of community organisation as a method through a study of concepts in relation to the community, is of vital importance for, as Gordon Hearn says, "professional practice is a combination of believing, knowing and doing."⁷ An attempt is made here to study these concepts.

SOME CONCEPTS

According to Russell Kurtz, the simplest form of community organisation for social welfare is achieved whenever a group of citizens, recognizing a need, band together to see that the need is met. Most social agencies have sprung from such beginnings.⁸ Thus people have to get together over a problem, form social relationships and develop cooperative attitudes, and through this, work out solutions.

Community organisation within the context of social work and outside it, is explained by Kenneth Pray as follows: "When the professional's focal concern and objective is the development and guidance of the process and enabling people to find satisfying and fruitful social relationships and not for specific and preconceived forms of relationships, then it is social work"⁹

In the social work situation, Campbell Murphy saw the role of the worker as an 'enabler', a 'creative leader', or a 'professional worker'¹⁰ He pointed out that, based on their orientations, community workers were during the 50's more concerned with the process rather than with the end itself. They were also giving "realistic recognition to power structure in a community and its impact on social welfare". Thus the community was looked at as one whole in providing services to it. Hence this brought community organisation to where practitioners considered the community 'as a client'. Its goal was 'caring for' rather than 'curing' which implied prevention of social ills. This called for a broadening of interests on the part of the worker, from the social welfare field to politics, economics, labour and other areas of modern society.

In 1961, while discussing this trend with social work educators William Dyson felt that practitioners had reached a crisis point in conceptualisation. Some advanced the view that practitioners should confine themselves to the social welfare field while others saw community organisation as a valid form of social work practice. The proponents of the first view defined practice as a 'community welfare organisation' whereas the latter view defined it as simply 'community organisation'.¹¹ Dyson preferred the broader and wider view.

Earlier writers, for example Arthur Dunham, emphasised coordination of services of social welfare agencies through community chests and welfare councils. Skills and techniques were known but no theory was attempted. Murray Ross helped to develop the

concept of community organisation as a "direct service to communities". This means the practitioner worked directly with the community helping it solve problems or initiate services to meet community needs. The term 'direct service agencies' often meant agencies providing casework or group work services. But with the upsurge of government sponsored community development programmes in newly developing countries of the world and the urban renewal programmes in the United States, the concept of 'services to communities by professionals' came to the forefront.

Ross explains the 'direct service' approach of community organisation in social work by comparing it to casework. He says: "In casework there is the need to accept the client to develop a professional relationship with the client to start at the point where the client is now, to provide him with understanding and support, to help him make decisions and to take action, to help him struggle to overcome his problems, to interpret the nature of the process in which he is involved, to help him achieve independence."¹² In dealing with the problem, Ross says "Primarily, the case-worker works the problem out with the individual; primarily, the group worker seeks to have the problem handled with his help, in the regular programme of the group, primarily, the worker in community organisation attempts to help the community understand and work through the problem itself."¹³

Thus we see from the growth of community organisation that practitioners are either 'process' or 'task' oriented. In actual practice some practitioners are 'process' oriented. They try to enhance the functioning of the community to meet its needs or solve its problems. Hence much of the attention in this approach is on building good working relationships and cooperative attitudes among the people. Other practitioners focus on 'tasks' or achievement of projects. Here completion of the task or achievement of specific goals is the main purpose.

IMPACT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Since the 50's, under the auspices of the United Nations, national governments and universities, experts from the Western world served as consultants or as technicians in the community development programmes of developing countries. The impact of their involvement was felt both in underdeveloped countries, like India, as well as in highly industrialised nations like America. Community organisation in social work felt this impact, both in its theory and practice. With the increased use of the term 'community development' in the international sphere, vigorous attempts were made in the United States to grapple with the common and dissimilar elements in community development and community organisation.

As a result of documented material on work in rural and urban communities in countries like India, Pakistan, Egypt and the Philippines and the exchanges that took place between theorists, educators and practitioners, community organisation in social work in the United States was examined.

In 1960, Violet Sieder claimed that the real need facing the American community is the exploration of a whole new variety of approaches and services to meet changing demands.¹⁴ She felt that American communities were not organised. They suffered primarily from lack of coordination. Much fragmentation was apparent, as various agencies tried to do a piece of the total job. She thought that the role of 'enabler' limited the effectiveness of community organisation. She called for a more active 'change agent' concept of the community worker.

According to Hamili of the Philippines, Perlman and Gurin made an attempt in the early 70's to present four distinctive points of view that reflected important orientations in the use of community organisation.¹⁵ These are explained by her as "(1) strengthening community participation and integration; (2) enhancing capacities for coping with problems; (3) improving social conditions and services;

and (4) advancing the interests of disadvantaged groups."

Murray Ross propounds the first view. He is interested in process objectives and suggests an association in the community as the means of achieving them. The practitioner is a guide, enabler, expert and social therapist.¹⁶

The second view differs slightly from the first, the concentration being on improving communication and interaction in order to enhance the ability of the community to cope up with its changing environment. Ronald Lippitt developed a conceptual scheme based on this approach of strengthening the community to cope with changes in the future.¹⁷ He posed three problematic situations and strategies to solve them. The practitioner plays four roles, those of catalyst, expert, implementor and researcher.

In the third view, the primary goal is to identify needs and deficiencies and to develop effective provisions for solving or preventing social problems. It means setting up specific goals and mobilizing resources to achieve them. Thus the practitioner plays the part of a planner. He is task oriented.

Morris and Binstock explain that the community consists of individuals and groups with different and often conflicting interests and needs.¹⁸ Power tends to gravitate into a few hands and these form the dominant faction in an organisation. Thus formal organisations operate and relate to each other largely in accordance with the major interests of their dominant factions. The planner intervenes out of concern for human needs, a desire to experiment, or in response to an external force such as a legal requirement or a desire for change that will acquire another goal.

The fourth view is different from the first, it promotes the interests of particular groups by increasing their share of material goods and services. By increasing their power through conscientisation they are drawn into the community decision making process. Two strategies are advocated to achieve this: one is

to strive for a larger share of the goods and services of public and private agencies by removing injustices, and the second is to arouse them from apathy and inaction by showing them appropriate targets and teaching them tactics for collective action. The practitioner here is an enabler, broker, advocate and activist.

Commenting on these orientations Hamih from the Philippines writes: "Broadly speaking, all four schemes are oriented towards the achievement of social change and toward both the improvement of social provision and the strengthening of relationships and problem-solving capacities. Each writer however specifies his primary goal and strategy for achieving change in different terms".¹⁹

Thus the range of programmes, strategies, tactics, modes of organising and technical tools for planning has considerably enlarged over the years. Social planning is increasingly recognised as a relevant subject matter by professions such as social work; both the theory and practice of community organisation has advanced considerably since 1960 and now takes account of the wider range of tasks and roles.

It appears that in the past too much was expected from community organisation and social planning. Hence there was disappointment and disillusionment about the uses and potentials of community action. However, the use of community organisation continued and it has over the years become more professionalised.

DEFINITIONS

To be able to engage in community organisation practice a clear definition is necessary. Several definitions have been put forth at different times, the common element in most of them is matching resources to needs. In a document by professional social workers the 'method of community organisation practice' is described as the orderly application of a relevant body of knowledge employing practice-wisdom and learned behaviour

through characteristic, distinctive and desirable procedures to help the community engage in a process of planned change toward community improvement".²⁰ To initiate and sustain the process in the community the method with its skills and techniques is required.

Ross defines community organisation as a process by which a community identifies its needs or objectives, develops the confidence and will to work at these needs or objectives, takes action in respect to them, and in doing so extends and develops cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community.²¹

More recently community organisation practice was defined by Kramer and Specht in more technical terms as follows. "Community organisation refers to various methods of intervention whereby a professional change agent helps a community action system composed of individuals, groups or organisations to engage in planned collective action in order to deal with special problems within the democratic system of values".²² They explain that this involves two major inter-related concerns (a) The interactional process of working with an action system which includes identifying, recruiting and working with the members and developing organisational and interpersonal relationships among them which facilitates their efforts, and (b) the technical tasks involved in identifying problem areas, analysing causes, formulating plans, developing strategies and mobilising the resources necessary to effect action.

GOALS

For the practitioner to get a sense of direction for community work, goals have to be set up. In community organisation, goals evolve through interaction between the sponsor, the practitioner and the community (action system). When the interaction starts, the needs of the community, the purpose of the agency and the aspirations of the professional come into play. The final outcome is the integration of the three.

Goals grow from the activities of the practitioner who tries to find out the specific and tangible results that the community wants. Then the practitioner helps the community to achieve these through mobilisation of resources. These are referred to as 'task', 'analytic' or 'programme' goals.

Goals resulting from the worker's perceptions of, hopes for, and relationships with the people in the community are referred to as 'interactional' or 'relationship' goals. They refer to the enhancement and strengthening of the community's functioning.

TYPES OF PRACTICE

The community organisation method is utilised in a multitude of settings. Attempts have been made by different writers to classify them into different types. Jack Rotham came out with three models.²³ They are (1) locality development and organisation, (2) community planning, and (3) social action. The goal of locality development and organisation is self-help and the integration of community groups. The target is the total community, regardless of class cleavages. The common interests among the different groups are identified, and the strategy is directed toward achieving communication and consensus among them. The worker is an enabler, catalyst, coordinator and educator, but the community is self-determining. Problem solving is the focus of community planning. The worker takes the place of an expert, fact finder, and analyst and as a programme executor and facilitator. Either consensus or conflict may be employed as a strategy. A basic assumption is that change can be brought about through rational decision making. The goal of social action is change in power relationships and resources. The clientele are disadvantaged segments of the community and the practice is one of helping them to become organised, to crystalize action issues and to engage in conflict-oriented action against power structure.

Kramer and Specht proposed two hypothetical models based on the character of

the action system (community).²⁴ They are (1) community development, and (2) social planning. In community development the action system is composed of individuals who are directly affected by the problem itself, in social planning it is composed mainly of representatives of organisations, who are not directly affected by it.

PRINCIPLES

A thorough survey of relevant literature to formulate operational principles for community organisation in 1964 showed that these were based on concepts developed by various authors.²⁵ These concepts were related to community, goals, professional help, relationships, social problems and needs, factual data, representation and participation, structure, leaders, cooperation and communication, coordination and mobilisation, and evaluation.

The community worker, when presented with a problem by the community, studies the many facets of the problem, diagnoses it, then along with the client formulates a plan and later implements the plan. He also evaluates the entire process in order to further help the community or to terminate the helping relationship. These phases, briefly, are termed study, diagnosis, treatment and evaluation.

Phase I (Study). The community, that is the client of the practitioner, must be clearly identified because there may be several communities with which he deals at the same time. However, it is sometimes very hard to decide this because the interests of the agency which employs the practitioner may conflict with those of the community neighbourhood he works with.

The community must be looked at as a whole and the entire community must be the concern of the practitioner. It must be admitted that in the context of some of the models operating today, practitioners in fact devote their time only to a segment of the community—the most disadvantaged groups. The strategy used by such practitioners is to

make these groups strong enough to confront the leadership (exploiters) of the community so that they may get some share of the goods and resources—wages or services—whatever it may be. They are then at logger-heads with the leaders of the larger community.

Communities need professional help to achieve their goals. When communities are confronted with problems, they need professional help, just as a person who has social or health problems needs the services of a professional. The professional may play different roles depending on the needs of the community and the orientation of the agency and his own philosophy. The professional relationship between the community organisation worker and the client is important in community organisation. The process of community organisation in a community begins when someone expresses a concern for community problems and mobilizes forces to attack them.

Phase II (Diagnosis). The plan to meet the problems has to be based on factual material carefully gathered and verified. Community representatives must be involved in fact gathering, and interpretation of facts. This will increase their potential for community action. In community organisation, better results are assured if representatives from various groups are brought to the process of study and planning right from the time the plan of action or treatment plan starts.

Phase III (Treatment) To execute the plan of action the community structure that is set up must be simple and flexible. The structure must be supple enough to allow a community or group to move on a plan when its readiness is really established. The structure must also allow time for 'chain reaction' to set in.

The discovery, involvement and development of appropriate and qualified leaders is essential to community organisation. In addition, cooperation and communication among the people within the community and between communities must be facilitated and encouraged by community organisation.

Coordination and mobilisation of resources in the community is essential for community organisation.

Phase IV (Evaluation) Continual evaluation is a vital part of community organisation. As programmes are developed to meet community needs, some time must be set aside for evaluation of the process. Regular feedback from the community is important. Criteria must be set up for evaluation of the programmes, to see how effective the action has been and what has been accomplished.

NEW CONTRIBUTIONS

Recent national workshops held in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh analysed factors influencing effective community work of outstanding practitioners who are working among the poor in these countries.²⁶ According to them, community organisation included the following elements in addition to those previously outlined: (1) The importance (to them) of a philosophy, vision or ideology of the kind of a just society worth struggling for, together with a deliberate option and commitment to the poorest of the poor, often leading to living and working among them; (2) Their ability to use the tools of structural analysis on micro and macro levels in analysing the basic causes of poverty in the situation, identifying, innovating, designing and using indigenous and culture based communication methods and materials like folklore, literature, stories, myths, dramas, mime, proverbs as well as using human resources like village poets, singers, painters, artists, in helping to recognise, become aware of, study, understand, diagnose and take action on their problems and their life situations.

SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES

Practitioners who intervene in social situations require both scientific knowledge and principles to guide action. Principles involve knowledge and value components tested through experience. These also influence the selection of techniques to carry out action.

The kind of skills required for community organisation depend on different types of practice. Whatever the model used, practitioners help people identify problems, develop organisations, plan and carry out programmes and assess their efforts. This calls for skills for studying communities by a variety of techniques, identifying and developing leaders, working with individuals, small and large groups, and building working relationships with people of different status and groups in the community. Here many qualities of the heart and the head are required.

The practitioners who choose to work with only disadvantaged groups in the community must be capable, through their behaviour, of relating to and identifying with the poor. Generally speaking, they are motivated by an ideology that is socio-politically oriented. Skills for conducting group sessions and raising timely issues to mobilise people to become aware of their situation of exploitation often referred to as 'conscientisation' are necessary for such practitioners. In addition, they must be capable of long hours of work night or day, possess a talent for quick tactical manoeuvres and ability to live with conflict and insecurity while carrying out confrontational or dramatic events in public life.

A skill crucial for establishing rapport with a variety of communities is the ability to assess and use culture for communication. A deep interest and understanding of proverbs, folklore, myths, songs and dramas enables the practitioner to identify with and work closely with the people.

Skills in maintaining relationships and communicating with different individuals and groups are very necessary for a community organisation practitioner. Ability to talk, write and speak in public will facilitate such communication. Formulating plans with the people or their representatives, recording, writing reports and drafting news releases are essential skills to keep the process moving. Sensitivity to public or human relations,

consultation (both taking and giving), mobilizing resources and budgeting them are essential for community organisation practice. Helping in the formulation of new social policy and legislation, providing information in support of it, if called upon to do so, and lobbying for it, are abilities required by those engaged in social action at regional or national levels. Some types of practice will call for travel in primitive transport conditions or being constantly on the move. Ability to cope up with constant change is called for in many national agencies.

CURRENT AREAS OF APPLICATION

Public welfare agencies use the community organisation method both at the national and the state levels. Their planning seldom starts from the grassroots. Building, allocating funds, giving publicity to programmes and plans, encouraging formulation of plans, and supervising and evaluating them are some of the functions performed by the personnel of these agencies. Collecting statistical data on particular problems or areas of concern, publishing books and magazines and circulating them, and compiling reference material are some areas where community practitioners are very active. They also initiate new legislation to change the environment or bring relief to disadvantaged or handicapped people. In preparation for these, national or state conferences are held which serve as public forums for debate on issues.

Voluntary social welfare agencies as they grow and multiply require the nurturing hand of the community organiser. Many such bodies exist in India at local, regional or state levels. The Central Social Welfare Board, through State Advisory Boards and field staff, helps local leaders handle some of their own welfare needs. Organisations like the Indian Council of Social Welfare, Association for Social Health in India, All India Women's Conference, etc., are promoting and coordinating bodies. Yet they often run their own programmes, since funds are available only for implementation of

programmes while the need for planning, supervision and coordination are often not considered when funding.

In many impoverished urban areas of Madras, Bombay, Calcutta or Delhi work among slum dwellers is progressing with the help of young activists rather than through professional social workers. Professional workers in such situations are more often development-oriented, while the activists use socio-political analysis to raise issues and mobilise the people, sometimes resulting in confrontation with authorities. People's organisations are often encouraged in these areas by means of which adult education of a functional type takes place and the community negotiates for improvement of municipal services.

Under the Department of Urban Development several cities organised citizen's councils to stimulate neighbourhood communities.²⁷ In Delhi, Baroda and Ahmedabad, too, such efforts have been made. Community centres akin to the settlement houses are found serving neighbourhoods in some parts of Bombay, Bangalore and Calcutta.

In rural communities too—among peasants, landless labourers, scheduled castes and tribals—there is an awakening. Early attempts at village uplift were made by dedicated missionaries and social workers. Later, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi many Indians were stimulated to undertake village reconstruction work at micro and macro levels, sometimes dedicating their whole lives to it.

Currently, under the auspices of local, regional or national bodies many organisations of tenants, scheduled castes, tribals, landless labourers, peasants and fisherfolk have banded themselves together to work for their own development as well as to receive a share of the government resources.²⁸ Young animators guided by an ideology engage in socio-political analysis of the situation in which people find themselves; through awareness building 'conscientisation' these activists enable people

slowly but steadily to attain their own development. While these activists use the community organisation method they are not social welfare or development oriented.

Different movements in India (such as those for abolition of *Sati*), the struggle for independence and, more recently, movements to mobilize women, such as SEWA have not only organised women using trade union methods and community organisation techniques but have enabled them to raise their economic status.²⁹ They have also utilized the survey, study and the printed word to make women from rural and urban areas visible to the nation and to the world. Micro attempts are made by community workers who have a business orientation to plan and implement income generating programmes to provide employment to women and girls.³⁰

The fisherfolk of the coastal areas of India are fighting a battle for survival against trawler fishermen and big business. Fisherwomen have organised themselves to protest against building factories that will render them unemployed. But the dilemma is that great hopes are built up and the goals are not always achieved. Small gains are made. But frustrations are often the outcome. Yet by this process the people get a taste of their own power, and therefore do not accept defeat easily.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

Professional social work in India began at the post-graduate level in schools of social work. Currently, some universities offer such training at the graduate level; yet in most cases the practical training is inadequate and the faculty often lack field experience.

To engage in community work requires strength of body and mind and the ability to be objective while also entering into the lives of the people. The process is complicated and therefore very confusing at times. Many of the tasks of a community worker involving direct services to the community can be handled in India by young men or women with post-

matric education. In such cases, the educational gaps being narrow it is easier for them to communicate with their client. Yet persons with this level of education are available for community work early in their work career. They are young and therefore flexible and easily adaptable to hard work in all conditions. They identify with the community more easily. They are also less of a burden on agency budgets. Yet their youth makes the community skeptical of them. Therefore, working with adults is at times a difficult task for them. In case they are ambitious to do well in life they are often seeking upward mobility and are lost to the community which has served as a training ground for them.

But if India's poor in the villages and slum areas are to be helped effectively thousands of animators and motivators are required. Many of these have to come from among the people themselves so as to be acceptable to them. The first concern in social work should therefore be to train indigenous workers who can handle many of these tasks and develop skills to handle them. A radical change in the outlook of social work education at different levels has to be made in order that post-graduate education can cater to experienced field workers who can then take on supervisory, training and administrative responsibilities, while persons with lesser education can do direct services. Otherwise, professional social workers may not enter the mainstream of service at the call of the poor and the disadvantaged.

The mobile team approach at the local as well as the regional and national levels is becoming acceptable in India.³¹ Teams of persons specialized in community health, agriculture, home science or intermediate technology move from place to place to be accessible to people in remote areas to motivate, educate and mobilise them. The community organiser with his/her expertise in human relationships can hold the team together under difficult conditions in India's far flung areas by providing leadership. Only such types of programmes which reach out are

a real challenge to the professional and can touch and improve the lives of India's poor.

The live-in village and slum approach is yet another new trend in social work.³² The mass of Indian people, though intelligent are ignorant and steeped in tradition, with a culture peculiar to their caste, religion or region. A tremendous effort is required to observe and study them closely. The 'live-in' approach is often adopted by anthropologists to study the way of life of the people. To adopt this approach social work calls for people with sincere dedication and an ability to live with them, understand them, identify with them and improve them through their own initiative.

National and regional institutes (both action, research and service oriented) and university departments, through their extension services, reach out to the far flung villages to assist sponsors of projects and programmes, and to make feasibility studies for applications they make for funding to government or voluntary donor agencies. Using community organisation skills and methods they help sponsors or people's organisations to initiate, plan, implement and evaluate projects and programmes. These institutes often take up pioneering ventures which serve as models for other agencies to follow. Much creativity and a spirit of leadership is called for from professionals who work in such type of ventures.

The mass media have not really been nurtured by community organisers to achieve their community goals. Low cost communication is a wide open field where community organisers have to learn to make visual aids and develop skills to utilize them. Community organisers have to be constantly innovative to meet changing needs.

JESSIE B TELLIS-NAYAK

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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBER

Cost of Living Index is an economic concept which has been subjected to measurement on a very wide scale in response to constant demand

for such a measure. The origin of such a demand goes back to World War I which witnessed in the major countries of the world "a sharp and general advance in prices, labour unrest and industrial conflict threatening in some cases to halt production of munitions and effective prosecution of the war"¹ This acted as a common and powerful stimulus to the emergence of established regularly published indices purporting to measure changes in the cost of living. Between 1916 and 1918 regularly published indices were developed in Great Britain, Norway, Denmark and the United States.² Thirteen other countries, namely, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, New Zealand, Poland, South Africa and Sweden developed similar indices.³

CONCEPT

Human beings consume/utilise certain goods and also make use of certain services. For doing so some costs have to be incurred. The sum total of all such costs goes to make up what is known as 'cost of living'. However, in attempting to build an index of 'cost of living', one is confronted with the problem of measuring this cost for the same standard of living in two different situations. Only then it can be said that the cost in one situation at a point of time is higher/lower/same as in the other situation. It will be noted that the crucial word in the above description is 'same' which has been left undefined. A number of attempts have been made to specify its connotation.

According to Staehle, "the problem of cost of living comparisons may most appropriately be described as that of determining money incomes which yield *equivalent satisfaction* in two or more situations"⁴ Schultz is more specific about the 'situations' and is at the same time more elaborate when he says that, "the true index of cost of living is the ratio of the money expenditure of an individual which secures for him the same standard of living or total utility in two situations which differ only in respect of prices"⁵ Ulmer has analysed the definition. According to him, the definition of

cost of living index calls for either of two equivalent procedures "(1) identifying persons or groups of persons, enjoying equal real incomes in two different situations (over time or from place to place) and comparing their money incomes, or (2) identifying two commodity incomes which yield equal real incomes in two different situations and comparing their money cost"⁶ Here money income is taken as the equivalent of money expenditure, while commodity income refers to the goods and services purchased with money income, the resulting satisfaction (or utility income) derived from these goods and services equal real income. The commodity incomes are considered equivalent when they provide equal real incomes.

The crucial concept in the above discussion on the theory of cost of living index is the concept of real income/utility income or satisfaction which depends, besides prices, on other factors such as consumer preference and the universe of goods and services available to the consumer. The involvement of these other factors renders the concept of cost of living index unsuitable for objective measurement.

Recognising the unsuitability of the concept of Cost of Living Index as a practical measure, the Sixth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1947) redefined that such an index should attempt to measure "(1) The object of cost of living index numbers should be to measure the changes over time in retail prices of a given standard of living (ii) This in practice means that the index should measure the changes in retail prices of a given consumption pattern".⁷

The Conference further distinguished between the Cost of Living Index and Consumer Price Index (CPI) and observed as follows "In order to promote understanding of the nature and uses of indices of retail prices charged to a particular group, the term 'Cost of Living Index' should be replaced, in appropriate circumstances, by the term 'Price of Living Index', 'Cost of Living Price Index' or 'Consumer Price Index'".⁸ As a result of the above observations and recommendations, the

present practice, which is almost universal, is to call such index numbers which measure changes in the level of consumer prices, rather than changes in the cost of living, as Consumer Price Index Numbers.

USES OF CPI NUMBERS

Consumer Price Index Numbers are generally used for the adjustment of wages and salaries in India. They are also used in the calculation of real wages, adjustment in business and individual contracts, deflation of income and value in national accounts, formulation of general economic policy with respect to wages, prices and taxation, adjustment of amount of alimony payments and amenities, etc. Appreciating its wide use, the Labour Bureau, Government of India, mails every month the Consumer Price Index Numbers compiled by it to the various users.

CURRENT SERIES OF CPI NUMBER

The construction and maintenance of Consumer Price Index Numbers (until recently called Cost of Living Index Numbers) in India dates back to the period immediately following World War I, when the attention of several provincial governments was focused on the problem of rising cost of living which led to the conducting of socio-economic surveys among the working class preliminary to the construction of cost of living index numbers. Family budget enquiries were conducted in some industrial centres in Bihar during the years 1910-14 and also during 1923. Such enquiries were also conducted in Bombay city in 1921, in Sholapur in 1925 and in Ahmedabad in 1926. These enquiries, however, by present day standards were not conducted in a scientific manner. The Royal Commission on Labour in India noted the great paucity of statistical material in the country for judging the standard of living of workers and observed, "The construction of reliable cost of living indices, which should be one result of the enquiries we advocate, would be of the greatest assistance to the employers and government in

the provinces concerned."⁹ Following this recommendation, family budget enquiries were conducted during the thirties in a number of the then provinces like Bombay, Madras, United Provinces, in a more scientific way and a series of cost of living index numbers were brought out for various centres.

World War II again brought in its wake a sharp rise in consumer prices and the question of compensating earnings of employees for the rise in price through payment of dearness allowance came to the forefront. The Rau Court of Enquiry (1940), constituted under the Trade Disputes Act, 1929, while investigating the question of dearness allowance to railway employees, observed: "None of the Cost of Living Index figures, at present available, are entirely satisfactory. The Bombay figure, which in most respects is above criticism, is not quite up-to-date in certain items, and although the Bombay Labour Office has been doing its best to bring it up-to-date, the difficulties have so far proved insuperable and the defect still remains. Knowing how much care and thought the Bombay Labour Office bestows on the preparation of its figures, we should be surprised if the cost of living figures prepared at other centres were less open to criticism. We accordingly recommend that the question of preparing and maintaining such figures for the purposes of Central Government be considered by the Government of India."¹⁰

In accepting the above recommendation, the Central Government took upon itself the responsibility for the compilation and maintenance of cost of living index numbers for important centres in the country. As a result, the Government of India initiated the Cost of Living Index Scheme in 1941 and, during the years 1943-46, the Cost of Living Directorate (which later grew into the Labour Bureau) conducted family budget enquiries in 22 industrial centres of the country.

With the passage of time, it was felt that these series were fast losing their representativeness in regard to current situations since the consumption patterns on

which these were based were becoming out of date. Moreover, the lack of uniformity in procedures, concepts, definitions and base periods adopted in the compilation of the different series, came in the way of building up in a scientific manner an All-India Index, the need for which was increasingly felt with the rapid development of industries all over the country. Thus, fresh family budget enquiries on uniform and scientific lines for revising and replacing the old series had become imperative.

Accordingly, during 1958-59, the Government of India conducted fresh family living surveys among industrial workers at 50 important industrial centres all over the country on a uniform and scientific basis as laid down by the Technical Advisory Committee on Cost of Living Index Numbers. On the basis of the weighting diagrams thrown up by these enquiries, a series of Consumer Price Index Numbers on base 1960=100, for 50 centres and All-India are being compiled and published by the Labour Bureau, Government of India. The Labour Bureau also compiles and publishes series of index numbers for industrial workers/working class of a few other centres which, however, are not considered for the construction of the series of Consumer Price Index Numbers for All-India on base 1960=100. Similarly, some of the State Statistical Bureaus are compiling and publishing Consumer Price Index Numbers for certain centres in their States.

Realising that consumer price index numbers for industrial workers described above would not be suitable for adjustment of wages/dearness allowance of non-manual employees in government, trade, banking, insurance, etc. a parallel family budget survey was simultaneously conducted in 1960 among urban non-manual employees at 45 important urban centres. With the help of weighting diagrams derived from consumer expenditure data obtained from these surveys, the Central Statistical Organisation of the Government of India is constructing and publishing series of C P I Numbers on base 1960=100 for 45 urban centres as also for All-India.

On the basis of consumer expenditure data obtained from the First Agricultural Labour Enquiry (1950-51) and rural retail prices collected by the National Sample Survey Organisation (N S S O), the Labour Bureau constructed and maintained an interim series of consumer price index numbers on base 1950-51=100 for agricultural labourers of 15 States. Subsequently, with the help of weighting diagrams derived from the consumer expenditure data collected during the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry (1956-57) and the price data collected by the National Sample Survey Organisation, the Labour Bureau constructed a series of C P I Numbers on base 1960-61=100, for 15 States/groups of States and for All-India. These series of C P I Numbers are regularly compiled and published since September 1964.

The three series of C P I Numbers at All-India level which are being constructed and maintained in the country at present are briefly described below.

ALL-INDIA CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBER FOR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS ON BASE 1960=100

Coverage Consumer Price Index Numbers for industrial workers (base 1960=100) are being compiled and published by the Labour Bureau every month in respect of 50 important industrial centres, of which 32 are factory centres, 10 plantation centres and 8 mining centres. The All-India Consumer Price Index Number is a weighted average of these 50 centres' specific indices. The factory centres were allocated to different States roughly in proportion to total factory employment in each State with the additional constraint that no State was unrepresented and no State had a share of more than 5 centres. Similarly, the mining and plantation centres were also allocated to States on the consideration that workers employed in different types of mineral production, namely, coal, iron ore, mica, manganese and gold, and plantations, namely, coffee, tea and rubber, got proper representation.

Family Budget Enquiry. Two essential

constituents of Consumer Price Index Series are (i) a weighting diagram, and (ii) retail prices of items featuring in the Index basket for the current as also for the base period. The weighting diagram—a technical name which represents percentage expenditure on different items of consumption—is derived from the consumer expenditure data thrown up by a family budget enquiry. To collect the necessary consumer expenditure data, a family budget enquiry was conducted by the government among industrial workers of the 50 selected centres during 1958-59.

Budget and its Classification: The family budget consists of all items of income and expenditure reported by the surveyed families. The expenditure can be broadly divided as (a) consumption expenditure and (b) non-consumption expenditure. Expenditure on items like income tax and other direct taxes, charities and gifts, interest on debts, repayment of debts, litigation expenses, life insurance premia, etc., which are considered as items of non-consumption, and expenditure on such consumption items as subscriptions, ceremonials, etc., as also savings and investments are not taken into account for the purpose of Consumer Price Index Numbers as these items cannot be priced satisfactorily. The remaining consumption expenditure is classified into homogenous groups. Consumption expenditure for working class Consumer Price Index Numbers are broadly classified into the following groups: (i) food, (ii) *pan, supari*, tobacco and intoxicants, (iii) fuel and light, (iv) housing, (v) clothing, bedding and footwear, and (vi) miscellaneous.

Since the items featuring in food and miscellaneous groups are of divergent character within themselves, they are further sub-divided into sub-groups. The food group includes (a) cereals and products, (b) pulses and products; (c) oils and fats; (d) meat, fish and eggs, (e) milk and products, (f) condiments and spices; (g) vegetables and fruits, and (h) others (sugar, beverages, etc.). The miscellaneous group includes (a) medical care, (b) education, recreation and amusement, (c)

transport and communication, (d) personal care and effects, and (e) others (laundry, domestic services, etc.).

Weighting Diagram: In the index basket, it is neither practicable nor necessary to include all items of consumption expenditure featuring in the average family budget. The criteria generally adopted for selecting items for the index basket are their relative importance in terms of expenditure and representativeness in the respective groups, availability of suitable units for pricing and the possibility of collecting price data on a continuing basis. Thus, items having significant expenditure and those with characteristic price trends are generally included in the index basket. For this purpose, the index basket tends to become a heterogeneous composition. Items having insignificant role in family expenditure are not included in the index. They are either added to an allied item or distributed over all the items featuring in that group/sub-group. This is known as 'imputation of weights'. Thereafter, the percentage of expenditure on each item in relation to total consumption expenditure is derived, showing thereby the relative importance of items in the index basket. This is known as the 'weighting diagram' of the index number. As the consumption pattern varies for the same social group from centre to centre, the weighting diagrams have been derived for each of the 50 selected centres after processing the consumer expenditure data of respective centres in the manner indicated above.

Retail Prices: The retail price of an item relates to a specified variety of the item and a specific unit of sale, which is most popular among the working classes and is the actual amount charged from the consumers. Thus, retail price is inclusive of all taxes like excise duty, sales tax, octroi, etc. For collection of retail prices, market(s) at a particular centre is (are) selected, keeping in view factors such as the size of the population group to which different markets cater, importance of different markets in respect of consumer goods, consumer preferences, etc. In each of the selected markets, two outlets are selected.

for each item priced at the centre except items with more or less stable prices like post card, railway fare, bus fare, etc. Frequency of retail price collection depends upon the nature of price variations over time. The price variations in case of standard items are expected to occur over long periods and as such their prices are collected only once a month. In the case of house rent, information is collected only once in six months. A short frequency, say a week, is generally adopted for common items of consumption. The retail prices of such items are collected on a fixed day of the week and at about the same hour of the day in order to avoid spurious changes creeping in. Here the concept of systematic sampling design is taken into account.

Prices of Rationed Items Rationing of essential commodities, especially foodgrains, is prevalent in our country. While some cities having large industrial complexes are under statutory rationing system, other cities are generally under informal rationing system. In the case of informal rationing, the fair prices as well as the open market prices of rationed commodities are utilised after averaging them with suitably assigned weights. The percentage of the quantity admissible to the family from fair price shops, in relation to the total requirement of an average family as revealed by the family budget enquiry, is the weight assigned to the average fair price of that item. The remaining weight goes to the average open market price of the same item. This procedure is based on the assumption that the consumer lifts the entire admissible quantity from the fair price shop (as it is supposed to be subsidised and hence cheaper than the open market price). The requirement not fulfilled by the supply from fair price shops is assumed to have been met through purchases from the open market.

In the case of centres under statutory rationing, only statutory prices of rationed commodities are utilised in the index compilation irrespective of the fact whether the quantum of admissibility from ration shops falls short of, equals, or exceeds the total

requirement of an average family as revealed by family budget enquiry. However, if the shortage in admissibility of an individual commodity (rationed) is more than 15 percent as compared to the base year consumption level in centres under statutory rationing, the percentage of shortfall in the supply of fair price commodity in terms of its weight at food group level has to be distributed among all other food items pro-rata except to the commodity under short supply. This procedure assumes that an insufficient supply of a statutory rationed item is met through the consumption of other items in the food group available in the open market.

House Rent Changes in the level of house rent are incorporated in the index after every six months, i.e., January and July every year. The index for house rent is built up following the chain base method. The total rent of a matching set of sample dwellings for the current period (of six months) is divided by the total rent for the preceding period to obtain the rent relative. This is then multiplied by the index of house rent for the preceding period (in relation to base period) to obtain the index of house rent for current period. Revision of house rent index is done half-yearly in respect of all the 32 factory centres. Housing index is not revised in respect of plantation and mining centres as generally industrial workers in such establishments stay in dwellings provided by employers or owned by themselves. It is now being felt that House Rent Indices in Mining and Plantation centres should be compiled by taking into account the changes in the economic conditions prevailing there.

Computation of Index Consumer Price Index Number for a given centre is computed by using Laspeyres' formula which is

$$I_n = \sum_{i=1}^m \left(\frac{P_0^i q_0^i}{\sum_{i=1}^m P_0^i q_0^i} \right) \times \left(\frac{P_n^i}{P_0^i} \right) \times 100$$

where I_n is the index for n th month, P_0^i and P_n^i are base and current prices respectively of i th

item and q_0 is the quantity consumed of the same item (i) during the base period, Σ stands for summation extending over all the m number of items included in the index basket. In the above formula, the

factor $\frac{P_0^i q_0^i}{\sum_{i=1}^m P_0^i q_0^i} = w^i$ is designated as i th item

weight (w^i), discussed earlier. The index is derived in stages, namely, sub-group, group and general (all groups combined).

All-India Consumer Price Index Numbers

All-India Consumer Price Index Numbers for industrial workers are based on centre-wise indices compiled by the Labour Bureau on base 1960=100. These 50 centre specific indices which are constructed on uniform lines are assigned weights on the basis of aggregate consumption expenditure of the working class population at the respective centres as estimated from the family budget enquiry. A weighted average of 50 centre indices yields the All-India Consumer Price Index for industrial workers.

ALL-INDIA CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS FOR NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES ON BASE 1960=100

Coverage Consumer Price Index Numbers on base 1960=100 for urban non-manual employees are compiled and published by the Central Statistical Organisation, Government of India, every month in respect of 45 centres. The centres were selected keeping in view their administrative importance, concentration of middle class population and regional representation. Priority was given to national capital and State capitals and other large cities. The other centres in a State were selected to provide regional representation within a State. Centres were allotted to different States broadly in proportion to the States' urban population in 1951.

Family Budget Enquiry The Middle Class Family Living Survey conducted by the Central Statistical Organisation in 1958-59 among non-manual employees in 45 cities and towns

provided the consumer expenditure data required for derivation of weighting diagrams for construction of consumer price index numbers.

Budget and Classification For each centre, weighting diagram for the construction of the index number has been derived from average expenditure pattern of families in the income range of Rs 100 to Rs 750 per month drawing a major part of their income from non-manual employment in non-agricultural activities. Items of non-consumption as also non-priceable items such as subscription, taxes, interest, litigation, remittances, savings, repayment of debts, etc. have been excluded. Expenditure on alcoholic beverages has also not been included. Expenditure on items of consumption not priced for one reason or the other has been imputed to related priced item (s) or to all the priced items within the sub-group/group. About 180 items of priceable goods and services have been included in a centre. These items have been classified into five main groups and 23 sub-groups, namely, (i) food, beverages and tobacco (sub-groups: cereals, pulses, oils and fats, meat, fish and eggs, milk and products, condiments and spices, vegetables; fruits, sugar; non-alcoholic beverages, prepared meals and refreshment, *pan*, *supari* and tobacco), (ii) fuel and light; (iii) housing, (iv) clothing, bedding and footwear (sub-groups: clothing and bedding, footwear), (v) miscellaneous (sub-groups: medical care, education and reading, recreation and amusement, transport and communication, personal care and effects, household requisites, others, etc.).

Retail Prices Specifications of items to be priced have been fixed in respect of each selected shop. If and when the fixed specification is not available in that shop or in neighbouring shops, these are suitably substituted with another popular specification available in the selected shop, and price for the substitute is utilised after proper linking of the two prices. This way the comparability of specification over time is ensured at the

selected shop level. However, the specifications priced at different selected shops are not necessarily comparable. This enables coverage of more than one variety for each item while maintaining comparability over time. Retail prices are also collected from fair price shops and cooperative stores and these are properly utilised along with open market quotations.

House Rent House rent data are collected through half-yearly survey of house rent. These repetitive surveys cover a fixed sample of dwellings occupied by middle class families. The sample size varies from 60 dwellings in small centres to 240 in big cities. The rent reported in each round of six months is compared with the corresponding rent for the preceding round in respect of each sample dwelling making due adjustments for elements of incomparability.

Computation of Centre Index and All-India Index The index for a sub-group is worked out as a weighted arithmetic average of the price relatives of the items included in the sub-group. The group index is worked out as a weighted arithmetic average of the sub-group indices and the general index as a weighted arithmetic average of the group indices. The all-India index is worked out as a weighted average of the indices for the 45 centres. The weight for an item/sub-group/group in a centre index are the percentage share of the corresponding average expenditures in the total consumption expenditure of the sub-group/group/centre. The aggregate expenditure of middle class families in each sub-stratum has been obtained as a product of the estimated middle class population and the estimated per capita expenditure of the centre representing the sub-stratum as revealed by the family living survey. The State level aggregate expenditure has been obtained by summing up the sub-stratum estimates. The percentage share of the aggregate expenditure for a centre in relation to the total aggregate expenditure for all the 45 centres is the weight of the centre index in the All-India Index.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS FOR AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS ON BASE 1960-61 = 100

Coverage Consumer Price Index Numbers on base July 1960–June 1961 = 100, for agricultural labourers are compiled and published by the Labour Bureau every month in respect of 15 States or groups of States.

Consumer Expenditure Data The Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry (1956-57), among other things, provided consumer expenditure data in respect of agricultural labour households. These data were utilised for the derivation of weighting diagrams for the construction of the series of Consumer Price Index Numbers for agricultural labourers. As in other series, items of non-consumption expenditure like ceremonials, taxes and cesses, furniture, musical instruments, domestic utensils, ornaments, other domestic equipments, cost of repair of building, etc. have been excluded from the average budget for purposes of derivation of weighting diagram. The expenditure on house rent being nil or negligible, it has been excluded from the average budget. The remaining items in the average budget have been classified into four groups, viz, (i) food, (ii) fuel and light, (iii) clothing, bedding and footwear; (iv) miscellaneous. In each of these groups, the selected priced items are those which are relatively important in family spending having distinctive price movements. The expenditure on items which could not be represented in the index was added to the expenditure on other items which were expected to have a broad similarity in price behaviour. Such imputations were made at items level, sub-group level and group level.

Base Period While the expenditure data relate to the period of the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry (August 1956 to August 1957), the base period for the consumer price index series is considered as July 1960 to June 1961 in accordance with the recommendation of the

Technical Advisory Committee on Statistics of Prices and Cost of Living.

Rural retail prices Rural retail prices are collected every month on the first market day or Saturday in respect of items included in the Consumer Price Index Numbers from a fixed sample of 422 villages spread over 39 agricultural labour enquiry zones/15 States/groups of States. Selection of markets and shops and fixation of specifications of items to be priced were done after a preliminary enquiry. Prices are also collected for essential items supplied through fair price shops and these are appropriately utilised alongwith open market quotations in the compilation of index numbers.

Computation of State Index and All-India Index: Price relatives are worked out for each item included in the index in respect of each sample village. A simple average of the village level price relatives provided the zonal price relative for an item. The State average price relatives are obtained by weighting the zonal price relatives, weights being the total estimated expenditure at zonal levels in respect of each item as compared to the total estimated expenditure on the items at the State level. Group index for the State is worked out as a weighted average of the state average price relatives of the items included in the group. The General Index is calculated as a weighted average of the Group Index Number. The All-India Index is worked out as a weighted average of the State Index Numbers, weights being estimated expenditures of agricultural labour households in the different States. The Consumer Price Index Numbers on base 1960-61=100 are being published since September 1964.

TRENDS OF THE ALL-INDIA C P I NUMBERS

The annual average All-India Consumer Price Index Numbers for industrial workers, urban non-manual employees and agricultural labourers are given in the following table:

Year	Consumer Price Index Numbers for		
	Industrial workers (1960 = 100)	Non-manual employees (1960 = 100)	Agricultural labourers (1960-61 = 100)
1969	175	165	186
1970	184	173	194
1971	190	178	193
1972	202	189	210
1973	236	212	247
1974	304	259	332
1975	321	279	360
1976	296	273	290
1977	321	292	320
1978	329	304	319
1979	350	321	333
1980	390	359	383

REVISION OF THE EXISTING SERIES

The weighting diagrams of these series, which reflect the share of expenditure on various items in the total family expenditure, are based on consumer expenditure data collected more than 20 years ago. Moreover, a number of new items have entered the consumer market and so also in consumer expenditure. Similarly, some of the consumer items have gone out of the consumer basket. To take these changes into account, it is the accepted practice to revise the weighting diagrams by conducting family budget surveys after the weighting diagram has served the index number for a period of about ten years. The I L O has adopted a Resolution at its sixth conference recommending such periodical revision of weighting diagram. In pursuance of the same, a family income and expenditure survey was conducted during 1971 among industrial workers of 60 industrial centres selected all over the country with a view to building up weighting diagrams for a new series of C P I Numbers for industrial workers on base 1971=100. A fresh family consumption expenditure survey was conducted by the Labour Bureau in 1980-81 at 70 centres of industrial importance in the country with a wider coverage.¹¹ Based on data thrown up by the said enquiry a new series of C P I.

Numbers will be built with base 1980-81 = 100 for replacing the current series with 1960 base. Similarly, consumer expenditure data collected during the Second Rural Labour Enquiry over the period July 1974 to June 1975 is being processed with the object of deriving a set of weighting diagrams for the construction of C P I Numbers for agricultural rural labourers for each of 20 States and All-India. The said series covering the rural area social group would have a larger coverage. For index compilation purposes, the Field Operation Division of the National Sample Survey Organisation will undertake collection of rural retail prices from a partially replaced sample of 1,000 villages selected evenly from each of the 200 strata across the country.

CONCLUSIONS

In the past, Expert Committees¹² were set up by some State Governments to remedy the defects noticed in the old series of Consumer Price Index Numbers. The present series of 1960 = 100 compiled by the Labour Bureau has taken into consideration recommendations of Expert Committees. Most of the Expert Committees found deficiency only in the housing group index which was kept frozen at base year level during the life time of the old series. Due care has been taken in the series of index numbers compiled by the Labour Bureau for 50 centres on 1960 base by making arrangements for revising the house rent index once every six months by conducting repeated house rent surveys at each one of the 32 factory centres on a continuing basis. It is noteworthy that no Expert Committee indicated the necessity of any adjustment in the 1960 = 100 series.

The general criticism labelled against index numbers such as, (i) weighting diagram has become outmoded, (ii) prices considered in the compilation of the index are wholesale price, (iii) only controlled prices are taken for rationed commodities, (iv) priced items considered for index compilation are of inferior varieties, etc., is based on inadequate knowledge about the methodology. The

National Commission on Labour had explicitly commended after a thorough examination that the price index series of 1960 = 100 was a distinct improvement over the interim series with 1949 as base. Moreover, the Supreme Court in 1965 had an occasion to examine the series and concluded that for the purposes for which the index was used, the series did not suffer from inadequacies of the type attributed to it. In 1980, the Government of India has appointed another expert committee under the Chairmanship of Dr K C Seal, Director General of the Central Statistical Organisation, to recommend improvements in the methodology of compilation of index numbers for the 1981 series which will be replacing the 1960 based series for the working class population.

ANAND SWARUP BHARADWAJ

NOTES

- 1 M J Ulmer, *The Economic Theory of Cost of Living Index Numbers*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1950, p 27
- 2 E G Barnett, "Index Numbers of the Total Cost of Living" *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, No 2, Feb 1921
- 3 International Labour Office, *International Labour Review*, Vol VI, No 1, July 1922, p 53
- 4 H Staehle, "A Development of Economic Theory of Price Index Numbers", *Review of Economic Studies*, Vol XI, No 3, June 1935, p 163
- 5 Henry Schultz, "A Misunderstanding in Index Number Theory, the true Konus Condition of Living Index Numbers and its Limitations", *Econometrica*, Vol VII, No 1, Jan 1939, P 2
- 6 Ulmer, *op cit* p 29
- 7 International Labour Office, "Computation of Consumer Price Indices (Special Problems)", Geneva International Labour Office, 1970, pp 13-14
- 8 *Ibid*, p 127
- 9 *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India*, 1931, p 450
- 10 *Report of Rau Court of Enquiry*, 1941, p 59
- 11 In addition there are six centres (viz, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Goa, Bhilwara, Chhindwara and Kothagudam) for which new series of C P I

Numbers will be constructed with base 1980-81 = 100

- 12 (1) Lakdawala Committee—for Bombay city, (2) Desai Committee—for Ahmedabad, (3) Shanmugasundaram Committee—for Madras city, (4) Ramamurti Committee—for Calcutta, Kanpur, Bangalore and Mysore city, (5) Bhattacharya Committee—for Calcutta

COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

Although formally the cooperative movement was born on 21 December 1844, with a store by Rochdale Pioneers in Todlone, Lancashire, a number of experiments on these lines were made in England throughout the period of the first half of the nineteenth century. The birth of the cooperative movement was inspired by the ideology of Robert Owen and Dr. William King which visualised the establishment of a society where exploitation of man by man ceases, a spirit of self-help and mutual help develops and the conditions of production and distribution are so organised that they subserve the general welfare of the community. The movement was intended not only to provide certain material benefits to its members, but it was meant to lead ultimately to the establishment of a cooperative commonwealth in which economic activities would be pursued on cooperative basis and the evils of both the capitalist system and the socialist system would be eliminated and a new type of human relationship would develop based on the principles of equality, fraternity and progress.

At about the time when the consumer cooperative movement was making its beginning and spreading in England, Raiffeison type village cooperatives and Sulz-Delitz type urban cooperatives were emerging in Germany. The movement was eventually to spread to different parts of England, and gradually to other countries of Europe. Today, it has world-wide ramifications.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

The following principles of cooperation were reformulated by the International Cooperative Alliance Congress held in 1966¹.

(1) *Open and voluntary membership* The fundamental characteristic of a cooperative society is that its membership is open to all who need the services of that society. The membership of the society is voluntary without artificial restriction or discrimination.

(2) *Democratic control* Another cardinal principle of the cooperative movement is one man one vote. By making this a principle, the cooperative movement emphasises the primacy of the individual in the management of cooperative organisations.

(3) *Payment of limited interest on capital* This principle aims at elimination of profit motive for conducting business and puts a limit to the interest earned on capital. It prescribes that after deducting the necessary cost of business only a certain prescribed interest on capital would be provided. In the event of dissolution the collective reserves are not shared out. They are made over either to another cooperative society or to a publicly approved body.

(4) *Distribution of surplus among the members in proportion to their purchases* This principle is also rooted in the concept of the primacy of the individual rather than capital in the cooperative business. The surplus is to be distributed among members in proportion to their services (purchases) from the cooperatives.

(5) *Education* Another principle of cooperation is provision of education to the members and persons working in the cooperative organisations. The cooperative pioneers know that for a new venture like the cooperative movement with a new message to the people to take real roots, people will have to be educated in its principles, methods, and aims.

(6) The ICA Congress of 1966 added a new principle for the cooperative movement, that

is, "Cooperation among Cooperatives" All cooperative organisations in order to best serve the interests of their members and their communities should actively cooperate in every practical way with other cooperatives at local, national and international levels

While these principles were enunciated as guidelines for the organisation and operation of a cooperative society, they were part of a broader vision. It was hoped that a new type of society would develop in course of time and ultimately the whole economic and social structure would get transformed into a cooperative commonwealth

BIRTH OF CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN INDIA

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the condition of a large part of peasants in India was so deplorable that the government of the time felt concerned to do something for their upliftment. By this time the cooperative movement had made significant strides in Europe, both in consumer and in agricultural credit fields. The then Government of Madras sent one of its officers, Fredric Nicholson, to study the working of the cooperative system in England and Germany and examine the feasibility and modalities of its introduction in the Indian situation.² The Nicholson Committee felt that cooperative organisations, if sincerely and seriously pursued, could improve the condition of the rural poor in India. A Cooperative Societies Act was passed by Government of India in 1904 and cooperative credit societies started being organised in different parts of the country. The 1904 Act was amended in 1912 to broaden the scope of functioning of the cooperative movement. Cooperation became a State subject under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 and several State Governments passed their own Acts thereafter.

Although officially the cooperative movement started in this country in 1904, it could make real progress in this country only after the report of the Rural Credit Survey Committee was accepted by the Government

of India in 1954.³ While reviewing the progress of the cooperative movement in India in the first half of the twentieth century, the Rural Credit Survey Committee observed that "cooperation had failed in this country but it must succeed", and it went on to make a number of recommendations and set up guidelines for the organisation of cooperative societies in this country. One of its salient recommendations was State partnership in cooperative development. The cooperative movement in this country made massive strides from the beginning of the Second Five Year Plan and today India has the largest cooperative movement in the world in terms of size, diversity and volume. The cooperative movement has in its fold more than 10 crore persons, 98 percent of the villages and about 40 percent of the families in the country. Taking all types of cooperatives together the number of cooperative societies at the end of 1977 was 3.88 lakhs, and their working capital Rs 16,000 crores.

Besides growth in numbers, another characteristic of the cooperative development in this country has been its diversification. While cooperative credit structure is the most dominant form of cooperative organisation, cooperative activities during the last two decades have emerged in the marketing of agricultural produce, processing of sugarcane, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables, etc. Industrial Cooperatives of different types, Consumers' Cooperatives, Dairy Cooperatives, Housing Cooperatives, Fishermen's Cooperatives, Handloom Cooperatives, Labour Contract Societies, Cooperative Film Societies, etc. have also come up.

One of the outstanding contributions of the cooperative movement in recent years has been in the processing of sugarcane. At the end of 1977-78, 186 cooperative sugar factories were licensed and 128 were in operation. Cooperative sugar factories accounted for over 50 percent of the total sugar production in the country.⁴ Indeed, some of the cooperative sugar factories have not kept their operations

confined to the limited objective of processing of sugarcane only but have embarked upon integrated development of their areas

Another area in which the cooperative movement has made solid progress is in the field of Dairy Cooperatives. AMUL Dairy Cooperative is a shining example of cooperative endeavour for transformation of the rural economy. The outstanding success of the AMUL dairy prompted the government to replicate this model in the rest of the country and they have set up a National Dairy Development Board to accomplish this task

A number of measures have been taken for the organisation of consumers cooperative societies for distribution of consumer goods which could help in holding the price-line and saving consumers from exploitation by private traders. At the end of 1977-78, there were 15,827 primary consumers cooperatives with a membership of 45.33 lakhs, 440 wholesale central consumers stores with a membership of 16.42 lakhs, 16 State level federations and one National Federation of Consumers' Cooperatives. The total sales of consumers cooperatives in 1977-78 were, Rs 70.42 crores by State Federations, Rs 329.28 crores by Wholesale Societies and Rs. 314.94 crores by Primary Consumer's Cooperative Societies, with a market share of 9 percent. A consumers cooperative superstructure has now been built up in the country. However, its performance has not been upto the desired level

The cooperative structure today is a major agency for the distribution of fertilisers to farmers. However, it is not only distribution of fertilisers in which cooperatives are playing a significant role but also production of fertilisers. The Indian Farmers and Fertilisers Cooperatives (IFFCO) today is the single biggest enterprise for fertiliser production in the country. It has a membership of 26,210 cooperative societies from all over the country. It is continuously expanding and it is estimated that by the end of the Sixth Five Year Plan it will be producing enough to meet almost two-thirds of the fertiliser needs of the farmers of this country

FEDERAL STRUCTURE

There is a four-tier pyramidal structure in the cooperative movement in this country. The base of cooperative organisation in credit is the primary society at the village level covering one or more than one villages, a secondary level organisation at the district level with the primaries as its members, a State level federation with district units as its members, and a national level federation of all the State federations. This type of structure has been found to be appropriate, given the geographical dimensions and the administrative setup of the country

PLANNING AND CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Soon after independence and with the launching of planned development, increasing emphasis was placed by the government on the development of cooperative organisations. In successive five year plans, government provided cooperatives with incentives, concessions and assistance for bringing about a transformation in the socio-economic structure of the country. The government envisaged four specific objectives for development of cooperatives in the Fifth Five Year Plan. The Sixth Plan (1980-85) has outlined the following strategy for the development of cooperatives: (i) strengthening of primary village societies so that they can function as multipurpose units, (ii) review of policies and procedures relating to cooperatives so that they can function effectively to uplift the rural poor, (iii) consolidation and reorientation of cooperative federal organisations so that they can support a diversifying agricultural sector through their constituent units, and (iv) development and training of manpower

By far, the largest component of cooperative activity in this country is in the field of agricultural credit. There are two types of credit structures for meeting the short-term and medium-term credit needs and long-term credit needs of the farmer. Out of the estimated annual requirement of short-term production credit of Rs 3,000 crores by the end of the Fifth Plan, cooperative credit

societies were expected to supply Rs 1,200 crores of short-term credit, Rs 350 crores of medium-term credit, and Rs 1,500 crores of long-term credit

In the wake of the green revolution in different parts of the country, it was felt that the cooperative structure must mould its organisation to meet the changing as well as growing needs of credit of agricultural households. A programme of strengthening and revitalisation of the cooperative credit structure is in progress in different States. Presently, attempts are being made to make cooperative societies viable to meet the credit needs of farmers. The criteria for viability of a primary credit society are that (a) it must have a business of at least Rs 2 lakhs, (b) that it must be able to afford the services of a full-time secretary or manager for the society, and (c) that it must have its own premises for its operation. Reorganisation of primary cooperative credit societies by amalgamating two, three or four societies and making the size of the societies conform to the criteria of viability is presently being attempted.

As a result of the reorganisation programme, the number of primary agricultural cooperative credit societies has come down from 2.34 lakhs in 1961 to 1.35 lakhs in 1976.

FARMERS' SERVICE SOCIETIES

The needs of agricultural communities for various kinds of services, supplies and technical guidance are of a continuous nature. Primary cooperative societies were sometimes too small to arrange for these services. The National Commission on Agriculture⁵ recommended that in order to provide integrated services to farmers, a Farmers Service Society (FSS) should be organised covering the area of one development block consisting of about 100 villages and a population of about one lakh. By June 1976, 147 Farmers Service Societies have been organised of which 101 were financed by commercial banks and 46 by cooperative banks.

Due to the peculiar social structure of the agricultural community, the needs of certain weaker sections such as the tribals were not being properly attended to. The Government of India appointed a study team to indicate a suitable institutional structure for development of tribal communities.⁶

The study team recommended that large-sized multipurpose societies should be organised in tribal areas on the lines of FSS providing all types of credit, namely, short-term, medium-term and long-term to meet their consumption needs, and their agricultural and consumer requirements, provide technical guidance for modernisation of their agriculture, and arrange for marketing of their agricultural and forest produce. In pursuance to this, a number of Large-sized Agricultural Multi-Purpose Societies (LAMPS) have been organised in tribal areas.

LONG-TERM CREDIT

As stated earlier, there are two types of organisations for meeting the short-term, medium-term and long-term credit needs of the farmers. The long-term needs of credit are met by the Land Development Banks. There are 19 Central Cooperative Land Development Banks in the country functioning through their branches. In some States there is a two-tier federal structure and in some other States it is a unitary structure. The number of primary land development banks on 30 June 1978 was 889, with 1,248 branches. The total membership of the LDBs is 55,53,888, regular members number 33,00,244. They have a paid-up share capital of Rs 84 crores and reserves of Rs 9.55 crores. Their total working capital is Rs 2,978 crores. The LDBs provide loans for land improvement, sinking and repair of wells, purchase of machinery like tractors, threshers, etc., redemption of debts, purchase of land, horticulture, poultry-keeping, etc.

In order to evolve an integrated approach for agricultural development, the need for a single structure was felt and the Reserve Bank of India appointed a committee to suggest

guidelines for this purpose.⁷ The committee has recommended integrating the short-term, medium-term and long-term credit structure in the country at all levels.

SHORT AND MEDIUM-TERM CREDIT

It has been indicated that the growth of the cooperative movement in this country has been mostly in the field of credit although attempts are being made to convert the primary village societies into multi-purpose service societies. By and large, most of them are still continuing with the credit business. Numerically, their number was 1,16,125 at the primary level at the end of June 1978. The primary credit societies are federated into district level societies. There were 338 District Central Cooperative Banks in the country, as on 30 June 1978. These District Level Central Cooperative Banks are further federated into State Level Cooperative Banks of which there are 26 in the country.

State Cooperative Banks have 351 branches including their main offices (June 1980). In 1978, the membership of State Cooperative Banks consisted of 12,975 cooperative societies and 16,774 individuals. All the State Cooperative Banks taken together have a share capital of Rs. 64 crores and a statutory reserve of Rs. 18 crores, agricultural credit stabilisation fund of Rs. 46 crores and other reserves of Rs. 30 crores. Government contribution to the share-capital of the State Cooperative Banks is Rs. 23 crores or 36 percent of their total share-capital contribution. Besides owned capital of Rs. 158 crores, State Cooperative Banks had deposits of Rs. 723 crores. The total working capital of State Cooperative Banks was 1,822 crores at the end of June 1978. Short-term advances made by these banks amounted to Rs. 1,821 crores in 1977-78. Apart from the responsibility of providing banking facilities, State Cooperative Banks also provide guidelines and leadership to the cooperative movement in the States. The All India State Cooperative Banks Federation serves as a forum for discussing mutual problems relating

to cooperative banking matters at the national level.

The total number of Central Cooperative Banks in June 1978 was 338. A major effort of the Central Cooperative Banks is to take banking to rural and semi-urban areas. The number of branches was 6,321, including head offices. There are 26 Central Cooperative Banks in Maharashtra. These have on an average 54 offices. Branch expansion in other States is rather slow. The total membership of all Central Cooperative Banks in June 1978 was 2,85,680 comprising 2,16,132 cooperative societies and 69,548 individuals. The total paid-up share capital of Central Cooperative Banks is Rs. 295.54 crores. The Central Cooperative Banks had a total reserve of Rs. 188 crores on 30 June 1978. The total deposits of all the Central Cooperative Banks are Rs. 1,376.60 crores. As on 30 June 1978, the working capital of Central Cooperative Banks stood at Rs. 2,954.11 crores, of which Rs. 927.59 crores were borrowings.

Besides District Central Cooperative Banks, in some States there are Industrial Cooperative Banks. Attempts are being made to amalgamate them with District Central Cooperative Banks.

PRIMARY CREDIT SOCIETIES

As stated earlier, Primary Agricultural Credit Societies continue to occupy a predominant position in the cooperative structure of this country. Even after considerable efforts for reorganisation of the Primary Cooperative Credit Societies, their number in June 1978 was 1,16,125. Primary Agricultural Credit Societies cover about 96 per cent of the villages and 43 percent of the rural households. The total membership of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies at the end of June 1978 was about 4.8 crores and the average membership was 412. The effective coverage of primary credit societies is very uneven in different parts of the country. The paid-up capital of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies stood at Rs. 420.68 crores in June

1978, and their total deposits amounted to Rs 165 16 crores. Mobilisation of savings by Primary Credit Societies is still very low compared to the rural potential. The main sources of working capital of primary credit societies is borrowings from central cooperative banks. Primary societies depend on borrowings to the extent of about 60 per cent for their working capital. One of the significant features in the lending operations of primary societies is increase in the share-capital of small and marginal farmers. Their loans to farmers owning upto 2 hectares of land accounted for about 47 percent of their total loans. Further efforts are being made to ensure that cooperative credit institutions cater largely to the credit needs of weaker sections.

One of the disquieting features in the cooperative credit structure seen in recent years is increasing overdue of advances made, the all-India average of overdue was 45 per-cent of total outstanding in June 1978.

GRAIN BANKS

Historically, one of the credit institutions which evolved in this country was 'grain banks'. There are 5,050 grain banks in the country. The total membership of these grain banks was 5,04,000 and their working capital stood at Rs 5 crores in June 1978. They are mainly functioning in Karnataka, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh.

COOPERATIVE MARKETING SOCIETIES

Increase in the supply of credit by cooperative credit societies enabled farmers to increase their agricultural production. However, in the absence of suitable marketing structures, they were exploited by private traders and the conditions of the farmers did not improve. Attention was therefore paid to the organisation of cooperative marketing societies to arrange for sale of surplus agricultural produce and supplies of essential requisites of agricultural production. As a result, a well-knit structure of marketing cooperative societies has developed in this

country. At the base level there are over 3,592 primary marketing societies for looking after sales of a variety of agricultural commodities. Whereas more than 2,800 marketing societies are general purpose societies, the rest are specialised commodities societies—cotton, 103, fruits and vegetables, 362, arecanut, 17, tobacco, 27 coconut, 24, sugarcane supply, 26, and other specialised commodities societies, 167.

The membership of these societies in June 1978 comprised 1,49,429 societies, 30,79,365 individual members, and 2,81,114 nominal members, and their aggregate working capital amounted to Rs 356 94 crores. Their total business turnover of sales of agricultural produce and supply of agricultural requisites amounted to Rs 969 crores by June 1978.

Important agricultural commodities marketed by all types of marketing societies in 1978 were: wheat (Rs 140 92 crores), paddy and rice (Rs 36 75 crores), cotton (Rs 74 61 crores), jute (4 45 crores), other foodgrains (Rs 29 38 crores), oilseeds (Rs 12 06 crores) and pulses (Rs 5 90 crores).

LINKING OF CREDIT WITH MARKETING

The Rural Credit Survey Committee had recommended that marketing must form an integral part of cooperative development in this country as it would lead to easy recovery of loans from the cooperative societies, besides providing marketing facilities to farmers. However, an adequate linkage of credit and marketing has not yet fully developed. Till June 1978, only 503 cooperative marketing societies had actually assisted in the recovery of dues of the primary cooperative societies. The linkage of credit with marketing is still in the formative stage, however some efforts have been made by processing societies, especially by cooperative sugar factories, in recovering the dues of primary credit societies. Steps are being taken to strengthen this linkage.

As in the case of cooperative credit structure in this country which involves a four-tier system, the cooperative marketing structure

has evolved on the same pattern with some variations in different States. While some States have a two-tier structure, in other States we have a three-tier structure excluding national federations. In June 1978 there were 380 second-tier central cooperative marketing societies. Of these, 208 were dealing in sugarcane, 4 in cotton, 16 in fruits and vegetables, one each in arecanut and coconut, and 2 in tobacco. During 1977-78 they marketed agricultural produce worth Rs 253.99 crores and supplied agricultural requisites and consumer goods valued at Rs 211.06 crores.

STATE MARKETING FEDERATIONS

The cooperative marketing structure is organised at the State level through federations. By 30 June 1978, at the State level, there were 22 general purpose marketing societies, 2 fruit and vegetable marketing societies, one sugarcane supply marketing society and 4 societies dealing in other specialised agricultural commodities. State level federations have a membership of 6,331 societies and 544 individuals, besides 1,767 nominal members. The value of agricultural produce sold by all the apex marketing federations during 1977-78 was Rs. 320.30 crores. In addition, they also supply agricultural requisites. The bulk of fertiliser distribution is done by the cooperative marketing structure.

The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) is a federation of State Cooperative Marketing Federations. Its membership is open to all agricultural marketing and processing cooperatives in the country. Its objective is to assist the State and Central societies in the production, procurement, processing and marketing of agricultural produce and allied products within the country and outside and to arrange for supplies of their requirements, namely agricultural inputs, machinery and consumer articles.

NAFED has embarked on a number of

activities to assist agriculturists. NAFED's efforts have provided a big prop to the producers of onion, potato and other perishable agricultural produce and obtained better return for them by embarking on exports of such commodities. It has helped in the stabilisation of prices of perishable agricultural produce by undertaking processing of such articles. It had a total turnover of over Rs 82.72 crores in 1978-79. It exported agricultural goods of the value of Rs 52.87 crores, mainly onion and potatoes.

COOPERATIVE PROCESSING SOCIETIES

While some of the marketing cooperative societies are also engaged in processing activities, there has been a growth in the number of independent cooperative processing societies for different kinds of agricultural produce. The most prominent type of these societies is the cooperative sugar factory. In 1977-78, 186 cooperative sugar factories were in existence. Their membership comprised of 17,947 agricultural cooperative credit societies and 10,52,337 sugarcane growers and 28,685 others. These cooperative sugar factories crushed about 296 lakh tonnes of sugarcane and produced sugar worth Rs 601.79 crores during 1977-78. Thus more than 50 per-cent of the sugar production in this country is undertaken by cooperative sugar factories.

There are 229 cotton ginning and pressing societies in the country. During 1977-78 they did ginning of 5.69 lakh tonnes and pressing of 5.54 lakh bales of cotton.

There are various other types of processing societies organised for processing the produce of their grower members. Their number is 619, comprising 27 paddy husking societies, 164 rice mills, 53 oil crushing societies, 30 fruits and vegetable societies and 345 societies engaged in the processing of other agricultural commodities. Besides 619 primary processing societies of various types, 547 primary marketing societies and 10 State/Central marketing societies have also undertaken processing of agricultural produce. The total

quantity of produce processed by all the marketing and processing societies was of the order of about 11 lakh tonnes in 1977-78

FARMING SOCIETIES

By the end of June 1978 there were 4,947 Joint Farming Societies in the country with a membership of 43,788 land holders and agricultural labourers with 2 60 lakh hectares of cultivable land. The value of production of these societies was Rs 7 27 crores

The other type of farming societies is collective farming societies. Their number was 4,750 in June 1978. Their individual membership was 1,63,312 with an area of 1 70 lakh hectares of cultivable land and the value of their production was Rs 3 76 crores during 1977-78

IRRIGATION SOCIETIES

Attempts have been made by farmers to organise themselves for obtaining irrigation facilities. There were 5,023 irrigation societies in 1975. But their number declined to 3,252 in 1978. The total area irrigated by these societies was 1 02 lakh hectares during 1977-78

FISHERY COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

There were 4,429 Fishery Cooperative Societies in the country as on 30 June 1978 with an aggregate membership of 5,41,434. Their total sales of fish and fish products were of the order of Rs 25 73 crores in 1978. More Fishery Cooperative Societies are coming up and the operations of these cooperative fishery societies are being gradually improved by modernising their business

COOPERATIVES AND WEAKER SECTIONS

One of the shortcomings of the cooperative movement is that it has neglected the needs of weaker sections of the people and the major chunk of benefits of cooperative activities is appropriated by the better off sections of the population. This is considered a reversal and distortion of cooperative ideology. In recent

years, a number of steps have been taken both by the government and the cooperative organisations to direct its services to the weaker sections. In the field of agricultural credit, cooperatives have earmarked a proportion of the resources for weaker sections only. One of the reasons why the weaker sections such as small farmers and landless labourers could not get credit was absence of security of land. Now cooperative societies have provided⁷ that credit is supplied to the weaker sections on the basis of production potential rather than on security. Similarly, medium-term loans upto Rs 2,000 for dairy, sheep rearing, etc are provided without security of land. State Cooperative Banks ensure that at least 20 per cent of their advances to primary agricultural societies are issued for financing small and marginal farmers. Procedures have been simplified to remove impediments in the way of financing loans to agricultural labourers for subsidiary occupations. As a result of these measures, the weaker sections receive 36 per cent of their credit from cooperative societies. It is expected that gradually the services of the cooperatives will be increasingly available to the weaker sections of the people

One of the reasons for ineffectiveness of cooperative credit has been inadequacy of loans given to members. Certain sections of the people fall short in their consumption needs and in the absence of loaning facilities for this purpose by cooperative institutions, they go to private moneylenders for their consumption finance and thus even the loan taken from the cooperative society, instead of being used for production purposes, is spent for either repaying the moneylender's debt or for consumption needs. Unless, therefore, there is an institutional arrangement to provide for the consumption needs of the people, cooperative credit will not be used sufficiently effectively. The Government of India had appointed a committee to propose measures for this purpose⁹

The weaker sections of the people are not able to get a proper price for their produce

Unless institutional arrangements are made to sell their produce and give them fair return, they will continue to be poor despite increased production. Now small farmers and small producers are being assisted through agricultural processing activities and provision of storage facilities in the villages.

A section of the population is engaged in the handloom sector. Most of these handloom weavers are exploited by the master weavers. The present economic policy aims at improving the condition of this section of the population. Although a cooperative structure exists for handloom weavers, most of it is dormant. The Expert Committee on Consumption Credit (1976) has recommended that prospect for development of the condition of handloom weavers lies in developing the cooperative sector and has suggested elaborate measures for revitalisation of the dormant cooperative handloom weavers societies.

COOPERATIVE TRAINING

For efficiently conducting the operations of such a large number of cooperative activities, the need for appropriately trained manpower has been acutely felt and arrangement for training has been made since the establishment of the Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management in Pune in 1967. There are 75 cooperative training centres located in different parts of this country to provide training to the personnel of primary societies. There are, in addition, 16 cooperative training colleges to provide training to middle level personnel in different States. The Institute at Pune provides training to senior level personnel, conducts research and offers consultancy to cooperative organisations. However, the cooperative training structure in its present form is not able to provide the requisite type of training to a wide variety of personnel both in terms of quantity and quality. Attempts are being made to give a sound base for cooperative training in the country by strengthening the existing training structure.

The National Council for Cooperative Training attempts to coordinate and guide the cooperative training institutions in conducting various types of training programmes. In spite of considerable growth of the structure, the need for more quantitative and qualitative growth is felt and attempts are being made to streamline training activities and improve the quality of training offered by these institutions.

The cooperative training complex in India also provides training to personnel of cooperative organisations from other developing countries. Several international organisations are collaborating with the Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management in conducting international programmes.

COOPERATIVE UNIONS

In addition to business federations of different types there is a Cooperative Union in each State. The objective of the Union is to work generally for the all-round growth of the cooperative movement. It enters into a dialogue with State Governments and other agencies for the total growth of the movement. It also arranges for the education of members and non-official leaders of the cooperative movement, organises publicity and publishes literature on the subject. All cooperative organisations in the State are its members.

The apex cooperative organisation in the country is the National Cooperative Union of India. It is the spokesman of the cooperative movement of the country. Besides dealing with State and Central Governments, it also maintains liaison with the cooperative movement in other countries and the International Cooperative Alliance. It also organises seminars and conferences on basic issues relating to cooperative movement.

COOPERATIVE POLICY RESOLUTION

One of the major recent developments has been the adoption of a National Cooperative Policy Resolution by the Government of India.

which was endorsed and adopted by the Conference of the State Cooperative Ministers held in December 1977. This resolution gives definite guidelines for the development of the cooperative movement. Such an explicit resolution by the government has come after two decades since the first resolution was adopted by the National Development Council in 1958. The government has elaborated the policy resolution by issuing 42 action points for implementation. The following are the major decisions incorporated in the resolution: (1) Cooperatives shall be built up as one of the major instruments of decentralised, labour-intensive and rural oriented economic development. (2) Cooperatives at all levels shall be closely associated with the process of planning for economic development and social change. (3) The cooperative movement shall be developed as a "shield for the weak". Small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers, rural artisans and ordinary consumers belonging to the middle and lower income groups shall be provided the maximum scope to participate in cooperative programmes and a massive effort will be made for the involvement of millions of our masses in the cooperative movement. (4) Cooperative development shall be promoted on a national basis, and regional imbalances in cooperative development shall be progressively removed. (5) The cooperative movement shall be built up as an autonomous, self-reliant movement, free from undue outside interference and excessive control, as also from politics. The autonomy of the cooperatives shall be based *inter-alia* on increasing generation of internal resources, mobilising savings in rural and urban areas, and decreasing dependence on resources from outside financial institutions and government. (6) A vibrant cooperative democracy shall be built up based on enlightened participation of broad-based membership free from the domination of vested interests. (7) Cooperative movement shall be cleansed of corruption and malpractices which sully the fair name of cooperation and harm the very principles for which the movement stands. (8) In the rural

areas, a strong, viable and integrated cooperative system shall be built up to promote total and comprehensive rural development by progressively strengthening the links between credit, supply of agricultural inputs, agricultural production, including ancillary activities like dairy, poultry, fishery and piggery, marketing and distribution of essential consumer articles. (9) A network of cooperative agro-processing and industrial units shall be built up to provide gainful and economic links between the growers and the consumers. (10) The consumer cooperative movement shall be built up to strengthen the public distribution system and act as a bulwark of consumer protection and as an instrument of price stabilisation. (11) Cooperatives shall be promoted as efficient institutions with streamlined organisation and simple and rationalised procedures. (12) Professional management shall be built up in cooperative institutions through a sustained programme of recruitment of suitable personnel and their systematic training.

AN ASSESSMENT

Structurally, India has the largest cooperative movement in the world. It has completed 75 years of existence in this country. Over ten crore households of the country are members of one or the other type of cooperative society. Thus a superstructure of cooperative organisations has already been built up for conducting diverse activities—credit, marketing of agricultural produce, supplies of agricultural inputs, processing of a number of agricultural commodities such as sugar, fruits, and vegetables, dairy, fishery, handloom, handicrafts, housing, etc. Some cooperatives have made significant achievements in their field of operation such as Amul Dairy Cooperative, cooperative sugar factories of Maharashtra, Indian Farmers Fertilisers Cooperatives (IFFCO), PETROFILS, etc.

One of the strengths of cooperative movement in this country is its diversification.

In contrast to cooperative development in some other countries, cooperative activity in this country is not confined only to supply of credit but includes marketing, processing, industrial cooperatives, fishery, forestry, handloom, handicraft, housing, insurance, consumers, etc. It is built up right from the village as the primary society, as central cooperative society at the district level, and State and national level federations

Despite the edifice, however, the movement has not yet succeeded in any significant measure in making any impact on the social and economic life of the people. Except in a few items such as delivery of credit and processing of sugarcane, its share in total economic activity of the country is not significant.

Another weakness of the cooperative movement is its uneven development in the country. Whereas Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Punjab are considered cooperatively advanced States, the cooperative movement is very weak in Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir and in Assam and other eastern States.

Another weakness of the Indian cooperative movement is that cooperative institutions have been monopolised by influential sections of the people and weaker sections are not being adequately served by cooperatives. Despite several recent measures taken to extend the services of cooperatives to weaker sections, much remains to be done. Cooperative organisations in this country are by and large having very inefficient management though there are some notable exceptions. Efforts are being made to improve their management performance. But the major weakness of cooperative organisations is that they do not have adequate resources of their own. They depend heavily on government for financial and other assistance which has the effect of limiting their autonomy. If cooperatives have to function as genuine cooperatives, they have to be self-reliant and mobilise their own resources.

Another weakness of the cooperative movement is that a large number of members of cooperative societies are illiterate and uneducated. By and large the cooperative movement lacks devoted, capable and selfless leadership which is a crucial factor for cooperative development anywhere in the world.

FUTURE ROLE AND PERSPECTIVE

India is currently facing a number of challenges in her socio-economic development. The success of cooperatives will depend on the alacrity and swiftness with which the cooperative structure revamps its working to adapt and reorient itself to meet the challenges. The main task during the next two to three decades is how to modernise the rural and agricultural economy. The prevalence of a large number of weak and unorganised economic units provide ample opportunity for cooperative action. Prospects for the success of cooperative organisations exist because already a well-spread superstructure of cooperative organisation has been established in villages and towns. The experience of a number of successful cooperative organisations like the Amul Cooperative, sugar factories in Maharashtra, MARKFED of Punjab, COOPTEx of Tamil Nadu, APCO of Andhra Pradesh, etc. demonstrates that a cooperative organisation has in it the necessary vitality to forge ahead.

Another positive factor for the growth of the cooperative movement is that government policy continues to encourage and assist the cooperative form of organisation for weaker sections of the people. Cooperatives are also introducing modern techniques in their operations and, as a result, the functioning of cooperative organisations will be more efficient to deliver the goods to its members. Cooperatives have a very important role to play in the future social and economic development of the country.

NOTES

- 1 International Cooperative Alliance, Twenty-Third Congress, *Agenda and Reports*, Vienna, 5-8 September 1966
- 2 F A Nicholson, *Report regarding the possibility of introducing Land and Agricultural Banks in the Madras Presidency*, 1895
- 3 *Report of the Committee on All India Rural Credit Survey*, Reserve Bank of India, 1954
- 4 The figures quoted here and in the subsequent paragraphs are from *Statistical Statements Relating to Cooperative Movement in India, 1977-78*, Parts I and II, Reserve Bank of India, Bombay
- 5 *Report of the National Commission on Agriculture*, Government of India, 1976
- 6 *Report of the Study Team on Cooperative Structure and Relief of Indebtedness, Land Alienation and Restoration in Tribal Development Agency, 1974*, Government of India (Chairman K.S Bawa)
- 7 *Report of the Expert Committee on Integration of Cooperative Credit Institutions, 1976*, Government of India
- 8 *Annual Report, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED), India, 1978-79*
- 9 *Report of the Expert Committee on Consumption Credit*, Department of Revenue and Banking, Government of India, 1976

CORRECTIONAL
ADMINISTRATION

Correctional administration covers the entire gamut of programmes initiated by the State on its own or in conjunction with voluntary efforts for the recovery, re-education and rehabilitation of individuals coming in conflict with law, within the overall system of crime prevention and criminal justice. In India, as in other countries, the origin and development of correctional services has come as a corollary of the shift in focus from crime to the criminal and the resultant emphasis on an individualised treatment and reformation of the offender in consonance with his personality traits and requirements of social mainstreaming.

In the light of the advancement of social sciences and behavioural disciplines, the traditional approaches towards crime control, guided primarily by the concepts of deterrence, retribution and incapacitation of the offender as the objectives of punishment, have gradually been replaced by a diversified framework of correctional strategies to bring the offender back into the society as a law abiding, self-reliant and dignified citizen. The experience has abundantly shown that the ultimate object of protecting the society against crime could only be achieved by reshaping the behaviour considered deviant through concerted measures to change the attitudes and system of beliefs within the individual. The repressive devices to prevent criminality are found to become counter-productive, when they fail to ameliorate conditions that force individuals to live a life of social depravity. The correctional viewpoint is based on the assumption that the phenomenon of crime that has baffled mankind since times immemorial, if ever to be grappled, would inevitably involve a deeper understanding of this behavioural manifestation in a sociological and criminological context.

The concept of correction, in its modern connotation, is distinct from the earlier attempts to enforce conformity on the erring individuals, though no penal policy could ever be devoid of an element of correction if taken in its rudimentary sense. The early legal writings on ancient penal system in this country, especially those from Manu, Kautilya, Yajnavalkya, Brahspati and Kamandaka, candidly describe the manner in which the offenders were punished in a differential manner in the interest of society, in keeping with the strata to which they belonged and the standards of behaviour expected of them. In the medieval period, while the legal system resembled that of ancient India, the offenders, in practice, were generally dealt with in relation to their proximity to, and the whims and fancies of, the men in power, and the religious considerations that guided the policies. Even during the British period, criminal law was

heavily tilted towards protecting the interest of foreign rulers with little regard for human rights. Doubtlessly, since the Prison Discipline Committee set up at the instance of Lord Macaulay in 1836, some important steps were taken to unify law to govern prisons and to systematise the approach towards the administration of prisons, with particular reference to health, hygiene and security problems. The enactment of the Prisons Act 1894, and the Reformatory Schools Act, 1897, heralded an era of serious thought to the problems of prisoners, both juveniles and adults, in relation to the ultimate purpose of punishment. However, it was only in the beginning of this century that the reformation of offenders and their rehabilitation in society was accepted as the overall objective of the penal policy and correctional services were initiated as a process. The developments since the dawn of independence have been much more rapid, culminating into the present-day approach behind correctional services, novel both in means and in content.

ADULT CORRECTION

Prisons constitute the largest area of correctional administration in the country. In fact, the development of correctional services for various categories of juvenile and adult offenders, whether in the institutional or non-institutional setting, came as an offshoot of prison reforms movement. There is no dearth of thinking on the problems and perspectives of prison reforms as a vital sector of correctional administration, what has really lacked is the will and effort to translate these ideas into concrete practices. The first comprehensive study of the conditions prevalent in prisons was conducted by the Indian Jails Committee in 1919-20¹. While delineating the role of the prison as a reformatory centre, the Committee made some valuable suggestions for legal changes, structural reorganisation and personnel development. The central theme of the Committee's report was to reorient prisons towards a more humane and purposeful

treatment of various types of offenders, keeping in view their individual correctional needs. Deprecating overcrowding and congestion in jails, outmoded methods and techniques of work, and the lack of clarity in the purposes and procedures, the Committee enunciated some basic standards of prison management. It strongly criticised the confinement of juvenile delinquents and youthful offenders with adult criminals in the same jail with all its labelling and contaminating influence. The approach towards the offenders sentenced to short-term imprisonment was sought to be rationalised by the adoption of suitable alternatives, such as, probation, fine or warning. Recognising the importance of institutional personnel as the correctional tool, the Committee said that the care of criminals should be entrusted to persons with adequate training, talent and aptitude. For enhancing the quality of prison personnel, the separation of the executive and clerical duties and the provision of technical staff at the institutional level were considered imperative. These and many other recommendations of the Committee had a far-reaching effect on the development of a diversified system of correctional administration and the indigenous texture of penal law reforms.

As a follow up of the recommendations of the Indian Jails Committee (1919-20), the substantive and procedural laws underwent several important changes. Section 562 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1860, was amended in 1923, with a view to facilitating the suspension of sentences in deserving cases. In order to provide a specialised approach towards juvenile delinquency, the Presidencies of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras enacted Children Acts in the early twenties, with several other Provinces falling in line in the subsequent years. For the treatment and training of adolescent offenders, Borstal School Acts were also passed by certain Provinces. Though probation as a mode of non-institutional placement of offenders under specified circumstances had found its origin in the Code

of Criminal Procedure, 1860, the enactment of special probation laws during 1936-38 by Bombay, Central Provinces and Berar, Madras and the United Provinces paved the way for a comprehensive framework for community based treatment of certain categories of offenders as an essential ingredient of criminal justice. With the transfer of administration and management of prisons to the autonomous Provinces under the Government of India Act, 1935, several Provinces appointed jail reforms committees to spell the objective of reformative treatment into practicable programmes but the progress in this regard was hindered largely by the repressive policies and indifferent attitude of the British regime towards Indian prisons, especially in the wake of the socio-political upheaval during the struggle for independence.

Imbued with the spirit of national reconstruction, the political leaders who had themselves experienced the inhuman, torturous and afflictive prison conditions in the pre-independence days, lost no time after the attainment of independence in preparing the blueprint for a thorough reorganisation of correctional services to cater adequately to the changing needs of Indian society. In 1952, the Ministry of Home Affairs invited Dr. W C Reckless through the United Nations to study the problems of jail administration. The monumental report submitted by him led to the appointment in 1957 of the All India Jail Manual Committee² for the task of suggesting a uniform structure for the administration of correctional services. The Model Prison Manual prepared by the Committee still represents an elaborate framework for the development of prisons as correctional centres. As the subject-matter of prison and allied institutions falls within the jurisdiction of the State Governments, the incorporation of the guidelines contained in the Model Prison Manual in their respective jail manuals has been a constant endeavour of the Central Government. Despite such efforts, actual performance has seriously lagged behind cherished goals and correctional admini-

stration continues to project an appalling image. The suggested standards and norms for action were, perhaps, much beyond the capacity of most of the States as a result of which the gap between rhetorics and realities has increasingly widened.

Lamenting over the prevailing conditions, the Working Group on Prisons, appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs (1972-73) observed "The prison administration in the country is generally in a depressing state. Most prison buildings are very old and ill-equipped and many prisons are heavily overcrowded. Convicts and undertrials are lodged in the same institutions throughout the country. Adults, adolescents, juveniles, women and lunatics are also generally confined in common institutions and there is a serious lack of separate institutions for these various categories of prisoners. Partly due to this reason and partly due to the fact that services of specialists have not been mobilised, we did not find any evidence of any effort for the individualised treatment of offenders. Indeed, the work programmes in prisons have little relationship with the need of the different categories of prisoners. Prison industries and agriculture are run on out-moded lines and are still following the patterns set during the erstwhile alien rule. Except in a few States, there are no facilities for systematic training to be imparted to the correctional or custodial staff of the prisons. The system of recruitment is of an *ad hoc* nature. The structure of the prison staff varies from State to State and the housing and other service conditions of the staff are hardly consistent with their duties and responsibilities. The system of convict warders is still in vogue with inevitable complaints of corruption and malpractices. Probation and other correctional services are scarce and ineffective. There is little coordination between the prison and the correctional services and many more persons are sent to prisons than need to even under the laws in force in the country. It is obvious that the entire system calls for a thorough overhaul and many-pronged reforms"³

The problem of overcrowding and congestion in prisons coupled with the lack of proper diversification of institutional resources for the purpose of an individualised correctional treatment, has been the main impediment of prison reforms. Besides the general rise in prison population, the number of undertrial prisoners has, in the recent decades, been swelling rapidly. Overcrowding in prisons seems to have resulted not merely from the increase of prison population in excess of institutional capacity in several States, but also because of the concentration of various heterogeneous groups irrespective of their varied requirements of custody and correction. Sometimes, the problem is camouflaged by *ad hoc* improvisations made to create additional capacity when faced with a sudden influx in prison population. More often than not, the declared capacity of a prison is different from its effective capacity, and in most of the cases, it has no relevance to the optimum capacity to be really manageable. In the beginning of 1981, there were 1,037 penal institutions of various types with a declared capacity for 1,86,784 prisoners. The Chief Secretaries' Conference on Prison Reforms held on 9 April 1979 noted that the population of undertrials in the country had been increasing at a faster rate than that of convicts and in certain States like Assam, Bihar, Meghalaya, Orissa, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal the proportion of undertrials was much higher. Since 1979, though the overall prison population has fallen considerably the number of undertrials has further shot up to about 63 per cent. Earlier, the Working Group on Prisons (1972-73) had pointed out that the daily average population of undertrials in 16 States and 2 Union Territories had risen rapidly from a total of 42,430 in 1961 to 77,409 in 1970. During this period, the undertrial admissions in the country had risen by 58 percent, as against the increase in the convict admission by 7 percent. The largest percentage increase in undertrial admissions was seen in the States of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. In terms of the

rate of admission per lakh of population, the Working Group found that the total admission of undertrial prisoners showed an increase of 29 percent over the decade, while the total admissions of convicts had a decline of almost 13 percent.

Apart from the increase of undertrials, there are several other factors responsible for congestion and heterogeneity in jails. Besides the concentration of undertrial prisoners in certain areas, the enactment of new laws, cumbersome legal procedures, lack of legal assistance to indigent prisoners, and influx of prisoners during political agitations are identified among the main contributory factors. Expressing a note of dissatisfaction, the Law Commission of India in its 78th report (1979), made a number of important suggestions for the speedy disposal of cases through a variety of legal and administrative reforms. Besides strengthening the machinery for trial and disposal, they have pleaded, *inter alia*, for a liberal use of bail system by expanding the list of bailable offences, especially under laws other than the Indian Penal Code, and by removing the statutory ceiling on the amount of bail. The provision for release on bond without sureties is envisaged to be considerably enlarged. More importantly, the Commission recommended the setting up of separate institutions for the detention of undertrial prisoners, as the induction of a large population of undertrials in a building essentially meant for convicts was considered irrational. Earlier, the All India Jail Manual Committee (1957-59) had also recommended that non-habitual offenders sentenced to imprisonment for less than one year be sent to open work camps and the long-term non-habitual offenders to semi-open and open institutions. Separate institutions were thought necessary for youthful offenders, women prisoners, mentally sick and diseased prisoners, etc. Accordingly, the Model Prison Manual laid down separate institutions for juveniles, youthful offenders, non-habitual offenders, habitual and organised criminals, difficult discipline cases, women offenders,

mentally sick prisoners, old and diseased prisoners, etc. It further contained that non-habitual adult offenders sentenced to imprisonment exceeding two years should normally be admitted to the central prison with a maximum population of 750 and prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment upto 2 years in the district jail with 400 as the optimum capacity.

Though the reformation and rehabilitation of offenders has been accepted as the ultimate object of imprisonment since the Indian Jails Committee (1919-20), the main focus of prison reforms has, till very recently, been on the humanisation of prison conditions and the removal of repressive aspects of incarceration. Even in these matters, prison administration in several States has been found faltering. Partly because of low priority accorded to prisons as a vital component of criminal justice and general administration and, more than that, for want of an enlightened professional leadership, the correctional content of prison programmes has remained neglected. The reformatory process entails study, diagnosis and planning for the treatment of the individual offender, which cannot be accomplished in a situation characterised by a mass handling of various types of inmates, outmoded methods and techniques of work and a limited range of therapeutic devices. In fact, a coherent policy on prison administration to be applied uniformly all over the country, though repeatedly stressed, has yet to emerge. In this context, the observation of the Working Group on Prisons (1972-73) that the time has come for the country to adopt a national policy in respect of prison and correctional administration, deserves close attention of policy-makers and penal administrators.

Since the financial year 1979-80, at the instance of the Seventh Finance Commission, the Government of India has made a provision for five years of Rs 48.31 crores for grants to 11 States (Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Orissa, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil

Nadu and Uttar Pradesh) for the upgradation of jail administration. In suggesting this provision, the Finance Commission had gone into the adequacy of accommodation with reference to the trends in respect of the number of inmates at various times and the level of facilities provided and expenditure incurred on them in different States. The Finance Commission, however, did not regard itself as competent to lay down the requirements of the modernisation of jails or the development of correctional services. It was mainly guided by the objective of providing certain minimum standards for the upkeep of prisoners, improvement in their living conditions and, to a certain extent, addition to jail capacity as urgently called for. Priority had been accorded, firstly, to ensure that adequate direct expenditure was incurred on prisoners, secondly, to bring improvement in basic amenities such as water supply, sanitary facilities, electrification, etc., and, thirdly, to construct additional jail capacities in States facing constant overcrowding. Evidently, the Finance Commission left several important areas of prison development still uncovered. The issues regarding the modernisation of jails involving functional buildings, trained personnel, and apparatuses and equipments required to administer custody and correction, are still unresolved. If prisons are to be decongested, as these should be, a much larger allocation for prison buildings will have to be provided. A scientific classification of inmates for the purposes of correctional treatment necessitates the setting up of special institutions for different categories of prisoners, in particular for the juvenile and youthful offenders, women prisoners, undertrials, long-term convicts, and mentally and physically handicapped prisoners. The essential elements of correctional treatment including individualised therapy, education, vocational training, productive work, socio-cultural uplift, etc., could not be ignored in the context of an increasing stress on the reformation of offenders as the objective of imprisonment.

The need to strengthen correctional content of prison programmes has accelerated the demand for the inclusion of prison administration in the national development plans. It is widely argued that the role of prisons as 'people-changing institutions' calls for a coordinated welfare approach within the overall strategy for social development. The programmes in prison have a direct bearing on the improvement in the quality of life and ultimately on the protection of society. The investment on prisons could be economically productive only when the institutionalised offenders are scientifically treated, re-educated and rehabilitated to assume a constructive social role. The newly emerging forms of crime and delinquency cannot be tackled without a vigorous reinforcement of diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitative approaches. Despite such assertions, the only scheme so far initiated as part of the plan, relates to the appointment of welfare officers in prisons and the establishment of creches for the children of female prisoners. In 1980, there were only about 80 welfare officers, excluding probation officers, working in prisons in the whole country. The welfare officer is expected to play a key role in the rehabilitation of the institutionalised offender by functioning as a link between the prisoner and the prison authorities on one side, and between the prisoner and the community, on the other. He is required to harness various welfare resources both from within and outside the institution in securing for the inmates appropriate avenues for their social re-assimilation. Surrounded by an army of custodians who are concerned more with counting heads than searching hearts, with locking up than unlocking knots, and with 'pushing out' than 'bringing back', this lone correctional functionary stands for the prisoners as a tiny oasis in the vast desert.

JUVENILE CORRECTION

A review of the development of correctional services would clearly show that among the various categories of offenders, the highest priority has been given to specialised treatment

of juvenile delinquents under the framework of Children Acts. The origin and expansion of juvenile correction has been guided by certain basic assumptions. It has been universally accepted that a juvenile delinquent, in consideration of the level of his psycho-social and mental maturity, cannot be equated with an adult offender and, as such, has to be treated in a differential manner with greater stress on his proper care, education and training. The problem of juvenile maladjustment being essentially the product of its own lapses in ensuring for the child the opportunities for a normal growth, it is naturally a matter of major concern for any society. Even from the viewpoint of social defence, a higher investment on juvenile offenders to bring them back into the mainstream of social life would not only be a sure method of prevention of crime, but also profitable in terms of the development of human resources. These considerations have weighed in favour of a specialised correctional approach towards juvenile delinquents as spelt out in the Children Acts within the overall provisions of the substantive law. In the beginning of 1981, besides the Children Act, 1960, applicable to Union Territories, all the States, except Nagaland, Orissa, Tripura and Sikkim, had the special legislation. The Children Acts strike a balance between the volitional angle of a traditional penologist and the deterministic attitude of a liberal correctionalist. As no delinquent act can ever be totally value-free, the juvenile involved is subjected to the processes of adjudication, control and constraint but under a separate system that protects him from labelling as a criminal as also safeguards from the deleterious influence of adult criminals. Simultaneously, the Children Acts prevent delinquency by rescuing juveniles from criminogenic situations as well as by protecting them against cruelty, victimisation and exploitation by nefarious social elements. The Acts lay down a comprehensive machinery for apprehension, remand, observation, disposition, care, treatment, release and after-care.

The exact course and mode of treatment of various categories of children centre around the functioning of the Juvenile/Children's Courts. Even in States where such special courts have not been established or are not available in adequate number, the general courts are required by law to adopt a procedure different to that applied for adults. In several States and Union Territories, the Juvenile/Children's Courts are presided over by persons carefully chosen on the basis of their special knowledge of child psychology and child welfare. The juvenile law and the special procedure contemplated thereunder, while restricting the State from pre-determining as to how the child in conflict with law is actually to be dealt with, provides a much larger scope for the Juvenile/Children's Court to prescribe a treatment that individually suits his personality traits and correctional requirements. The Children's/Juvenile Court, when satisfied that the child has committed an offence, can allow the child to go home after advice or admonition, direct him to be released on probation and to be placed under the care of any parent, guardian or other fit person, make an order directing the child to be sent to a special school or order the child to pay a fine if he is over 14 years of age and earns money. Thus, the modes of disposals adopted by the Juvenile/Children's Courts are much more liberal and treatment oriented, and at the same time, highly selective and individualised. Before reaching a particular decision, the Juvenile/Children's Court is invariably equipped with a thorough diagnosis, evaluation and probe into the personality pattern, psycho-social background and potentials of the child conducted by the probation officer, and/or as further supplemented by specialists at the Remand/Observation Home.

Moreover, the proceedings before the Juvenile/Children's Courts are characterised by certain common features. The cases are processed in an informal manner, with parents or guardian of the child also participating, besides the police officer and correctional

workers assisting the Court in arriving at a suitable decision. The hearings are held in camera so as to avoid any publicity, the children involved are not to be handcuffed, the police officers are required to appear in civil dress rather than uniform which symbolises authority, in fact, there are no strict procedural requirements, these being left mostly to the judicial discretion of the presiding authority. It could well be argued that the wide discretionary powers conferred upon the Juvenile/Children's Court to interfere with the lives of juvenile delinquents and other categories of children brought before it are liable to undermine their human rights, particularly in the absence of the same legal safeguards as are available to adults. Also, the production before the Juvenile/Children's Courts of such children as considered 'predelinquent', 'neglected', or 'uncontrollable', is bound to jeopardise their basic right of liberty, besides subjecting them to the stigma inherent in the system. However, in countries like India, the conflict between rights and needs of the child processed through the Juvenile/Children's Court is not as pronounced and, perhaps, not as real as in some of the developed countries in the West.

A continued support to the Juvenile/Children's Court approach and to its further strengthening can be attributable to several factors. Firstly, the traditional nature of the culture in this country still retains the responsibility for guidance and direction of juveniles primarily with elders and favours a paternalistic attitude on the part of the State both in meeting the special needs of juveniles in trouble with law and in protecting their rights as human beings. Secondly, the socio-economic conditions demand intervention on the part of the State in correcting situations of juvenile maladjustment and in providing alternatives conducive to a healthy and wholesome growth of socially vulnerable children. And then, the necessary safeguards against any deliberate infringement of the children's rights have been built into the system itself. The Children Act, 1960, as amended in

1978, provides for the constitution of the Child Welfare Board to deal with 'neglected children', separately from the Children's Court meant for delinquents; interchangeability of cases between the Child Welfare Board and the Children's Court, if considered necessary after a preliminary screening, a differential approach in the handling and treatment of neglected children vis-a-vis delinquents; and a vigorous use of voluntary agencies in matters of care and protection of children, as far as possible, within the open community. With a view to protecting the right of defence in judicial proceedings, the erstwhile restriction on the appearance of lawyers before the Juvenile/Children Court has now been removed.

While institutionalisation is used only as a measure of last resort, it is fully realised that there would always be a category of the children and young persons who need segregation and treatment in controlled conditions from the viewpoint of public safety as well as for their own welfare. The preference for community-based correction does not in any way degrade the status of institutional treatment, in fact, it sharpens and enhances its role in dealing with those who evade a solution within the community. As the development of the specialised approach towards juvenile delinquents is the outcome of the prison reforms movement, juvenile correction at its initial stages has relied mainly on institutional treatment away from adults. A greater emphasis on their non-institutional treatment is comparatively of recent origin in most of the States. It is now being increasingly felt that institutional treatment has been used indiscriminately. Criminological researches have repeatedly brought out that institutional treatment, especially with regard to young offenders, when taken recourse to unjustifiably, has adverse implications on their personality structure and behaviour formation. As a result, there is a general move towards rationalising the modes of institutionalisation, firstly, by identifying the types or categories of children who require such treatment and

secondly, by providing a more meaningful and constructive basis to the services in this sphere.

Withing institutions, three trends are clearly discernible: (i) the institutional resources are increasingly diversified to cater in a specialised manner to the welfare needs of various categories of children in relation to their personal characteristics and rehabilitative requirements; (ii) the institutional inmates are progressively classified for the purposes of correctional treatment; and (iii) the correctional processes are further individualised, to the extent possible, in keeping with personality variations and diversity of individual problems. The progress in this direction is, however, uneven being directly influenced by the level of public awareness and resource position though, in several States, certain minimum standards in the organisation of services are being increasingly adhered to. The recent amendments in the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Children Act, 1960, have a significant bearing on the quality of juvenile correctional services. The new provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, obligate the State to deal with a youngster under the specified age with a specialised framework unless there are reasons to be recorded in writing. The Children Act of 1960 contains *inter alia* that no delinquent child shall be sentenced to death or imprisonment, or committed to prison in default of payment of fine or in default of furnishing security. It also says that no child shall be charged with or tried for any offence together with a person who is not a child. Among the new provisions of the Act, as amended in 1978, 'fit person' or 'fit institution' has been specifically defined; the definition of 'neglected child' has been widened to cover children whose parents or guardians are unable to exercise proper care and control over them, with the abolition of the institution of honorary magistrates, social workers are now envisaged to be associated with the Children's Court in the form of a panel; in the institutions set up for the care and treatment of neglected and delinquent

children, the responsibility to ensure an all-round growth and development of the child's personality has become mandatory, and a comprehensive scheme of after-care has been appropriately spelt out. The progressive features of the Act are being actively pursued by the National Institute of Social Defence with the State Governments for incorporation in the State Children Acts.

Juvenile correctional services in most of the States are confronted with some basic issues arising from the increase in crime by juveniles and the failure of the traditionally evolved system to effectively cope with the newly emerging forms and dimensions of the problem, in the background of a changing social scene. What is urgently needed is an integrated approach towards delinquency treatment, evolved on the basis of comprehensive planning as part of the process of national development, with full policy options readily available ranging from the management of juvenile deviant behaviour within the family to the custodial treatment of the hardened and the habitual. On one side, the institutional procedures have to be appropriately rationalised in relation to the children and young persons who cannot be treated in the community itself, on the other, the non-institutional treatment has to firmly establish its credentials to function, if not more at least as efficiently as the institutional treatment. As long as social justice does not reach all the children in need of care and protection, and conditions in the community do not improve to ensure for every one an equal sharing of socio-cultural and economic opportunities, juvenile justice system has no other option than to shoulder the burden of correcting the failures of the larger social system. Such a situation necessarily calls for a careful blending of institutional devices with community-based approaches, of professional services with voluntary efforts, and of state interventions with the informal collective initiatives of the people themselves. At the present stage of socio-economic development, it may not be wise to plan for these services

merely in terms of cost benefits, resource constraints, or intersectoral priorities because as the pace of social change further accelerates, the war against delinquency is bound to become much more intense than generally visualised, and, lest it is lost, the existing approaches towards prevention and treatment must be vigorously developed in the future perspective. The gaps in services are too apparent to require an evaluation of their faulty performance, what is really necessary would be to build a system of the evaluation of the services within the process of programme development itself.

COMMUNITY CORRECTION

In the administration of correctional services, there appears to be a concerted search for effective alternatives to incarceration and for a greater reliance on non-institutional treatment for those offenders whose segregation from the community is not justifiable from the viewpoint of public safety. There are several factors responsible for this trend. It is being realised that imprisonment as the oldest and most universal mode of dealing with offenders has, over the period, been put to an excessive use, especially with regard to petty offenders sentenced for short periods. In the wake of rapid industrialisation, consequential urbanisation and technological changes, there is a growing demand for redefining the role of the prison in relation to new forms and dimensions of criminality. An increasing emphasis on the protection of human rights in criminal justice processes has brought to the fore the dehumanising aspect of imprisonment, when used indiscriminately. Criminological research on the contradictions in the preventive and rehabilitative functions of custodial institutions has led policy makers and administrators to have a fresh look on the entire system of correctional administration. Above all, practical issues like overcrowding in prisons, mounting cost of penal institutions, and inadequacy of the prevailing system to cater to the requirements of a individualised correctional treatment, have accentuated the

debate at various levels. However, the attitude of the public has been most crucial in determining the course of community-based correction. While on one side, a strong opinion for making the penal system more humane is widely expressed, there is also a cry for working out a more stringent and deterrent approach in dealing with offenders who indulge in violence, socio-economic crimes and sex offences.

The expansion of community-based correctional services is dependent on the texture of indigenous law reform. While the criminal law amply embodies the principle of differential approach towards the handling and treatment of various categories of juveniles and adult offenders, the Probation of Offenders Act, 1958, has been enacted to render the necessary infrastructure and specialised procedures. The rules framed by States under this Act prescribe the duties of probation officers, specify their qualifications, and lay down conditions on which probation supervision is to be applied, regulated, and if necessary revoked. The Act makes an adequate provision for the institution of voluntary welfare resources in the placement of offenders on probation. The Children Acts also provide for the appointment of probation officers to assist Juvenile/Children's Courts by conducting social investigation and supervision of cases. Defining the scope of application of probation, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, under Section 360, states: "When any person not under twenty-one years of age is convicted of an offence punishable with fine only or with imprisonment of a term of seven years or less, or when any person under twenty-one years of age or any woman is convicted of an offence not punishable with death or imprisonment for life, and no previous conviction is proved against the offender, if it appears to the Court before which he is convicted, regard being had to the circumstances in which the offence was committed, that it is expedient that the offender should be released on probation of good conduct, the Court may, instead of sentencing him at once to any punishment,

direct that he be released on his entering into a bond, with or without sureties, to appear and receive sentence when called upon during such period (not exceeding three years) as the Court may direct and in the meantime to keep the peace and be of good behaviour" It further requires that where in any case the court could have dealt with an accused person under Section 360 or under provisions of the Probation of Offenders Act, 1958, or a youthful offender, under the Children Act, 1960, or any other law for the time being in force for the treatment, training and rehabilitation of youthful offenders, but has not done so, it shall record in its judgement the special reasons for not having done so. These provisions clearly demonstrate that while the penal approach towards youthful offenders envisages imprisonment only as the last measure, it is highly selective in respect of adult offenders.

In this context, probation system certainly holds a good deal of promise for the extension of sections which do not entail the deprivation of liberty. Studies on probation have widely proved that the approach is not only highly beneficial to the offender, his family and the community at large, but also more economical than imprisonment to the State. The development of probation and allied measures may, to start with, entail additional expenditure on organisational structure including appointment and training of probation officers but it is much less expensive than institutional care in terms of per capita expenditure on offenders. Furthermore, an offender on probation has a greater stake for conformity than the one in prison. Besides its traditional function of dealing with the offender in lieu of imprisonment, the probation system has a tremendous potential for serving as an important link in social action outside the purview of the criminal justice system, in preventing conditions contributing to crime. High priority is, therefore, being accorded by the National Institute of Social Defence to the organisation of probation on the basis of an elaborate blueprint prepared in

1971, which was celebrated as the 'Probation Year' all over the country

Despite a widespread realisation of the need to de-institutionalise correction, it is difficult to determine a universally cut-off point upto which community-based modes of treatment of crime could be safely resorted to. In a traditional society that reacts sharply once a person crosses over the boundaries set forth by its inbuilt informal control mechanisms, public opinion tends to perceive community-based correction as a lenient approach, favouring the use of imprisonment as the main device for dealing with most of the offenders. The situation in this regard is further complicated when most of the persons brought within the purview of the criminal justice system belong to lower strata, suffering disparities and handicaps in the sharing of socio-cultural and economic opportunities. To them, institutional facilities may often appear to be more secure than the conditions from which they come. Therefore, community-based correction has to be based on scientifically evolved criteria, otherwise, there is a real danger for men of means to subvert its processes to their advantage and, by implication, the whole system denigrating into disrepute. The police and Courts are understandably very cautious in resorting to non-institutional treatment, and the policy makers tread rather safely in ensuring that the system improves without eroding public confidence. Within these constraints, there is a definite trend towards exploring new avenues and alternatives to imprisonment, especially in relation to such offenders whose confinement in penal institutions neither serves any social purpose nor helps them to become better citizens. At the same time, it is strongly felt that as long as there are offenders who defy all known methods, the advocacy for community-based correction cannot be stretched to a point of denouncing the prison and asking for its total abolition.

CURRENT TRENDS

Current rethinking on the efficacy and

effectiveness of correctional services is deeply influenced by a universal awareness for the protection of the rights of individuals who are in confrontation with law. While it is accepted that no system can ever function in isolation from the wider social system and the protection of human rights in correctional administration is closely linked with the question of human rights in other spheres of social life, instances where even the basic rights of persons in detention or custody are blatantly undermined, stir the conscience of the whole nation. Of late, in a number of cases, the Supreme Court of India has exhorted the State, with a sense of urgency, to find ways and instrumentalities for safeguarding human rights at various phases of the criminal justice process. In particular, the plight of undertrials languishing in jails, degrading treatment meted out to prisoners, and the dehumanising atmosphere which youthful offenders, women prisoners and mentally sick persons in detention are invariably subjected to, have repeatedly aroused strong indignation of the highest court. As a consequence, a variety of legal, judicial and administrative reforms are currently underway to ensure speedy trial and to secure justice for the poor, the weaker and the disadvantaged. A differential approach towards youngsters and women and an effective use of community-based correction in the handling of those who do not endanger public peace and social tranquillity, are being increasingly stressed. An appropriate use of discretion at various stages of decision-making has emerged as an issue of vital import in enhancing the quality of correctional measures. The country is face to face with a historic moment when the 'hands off' doctrine in matters involving fundamental rights of persons in custody has been discarded in favour of judicial scrutiny and intervention by the Court.

In this connection, a number of judgements recently delivered by the Supreme Court of India have brought to light the repressive conditions still prevailing in some of our jails and the manner in which the correctional

system, not properly geared and cleanly administered, can be self-defacing. Never before in its history, penal administration has been subjected to such scathing remarks by the guardians of law, and public disenchantment so great as it has been during the last five years. Struck by the plight of imprisoned human being, Mr Justice V R Krishna Iyer observed in one of his judgements during 1978. "Prisoners have enforceable liberties, devalued may be but not demonetised; and under basic scheme, Prison Power must bow before Judge Power, if fundamental freedoms are in jeopardy". In "*Sunil Batra vs Delhi Administration* (1979)", the Supreme Court of India, again, asked and affirmed "Are prisoners persons? Yes of course. The answer in the negative is to convict the nation and the Constitution of dehumanisation and to repudiate the world legal order, which now recognises rights of prisoners in the International Covenant on Prisoners' Rights to which our country has signed assent". While reminding that "the goal of imprisonment is not only punitive but restorative, to make an offender a non-offender", the Court candidly remarked: "The final panacea for prison injustice is, therefore, more positive strategies by going back to man, the inner man. The ward-warden relationship needs holistic repair if prisons are, in Gandhian terms, to become hospitals, if penology, as modern criminologists claim, is to turn therapeutic. The hope of society from investment in the penitentiary actualises only when the inner man within each man, doing the penance of prison life, transforms his outer values and harmonises the environmental realities with the infinite potential of his imprisoned being".

Another trend vividly manifest is the impact that developments at the international level yield on the self-evolutionary process of the social defence movement. In the world of today, no country could really be wholly immune from ideological changes beyond its borders, particularly in an area that concerns the functioning of human society. Committed deeply to the principles enunciated in the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, India has been playing a leading part at international forums in upholding the rights and dignity of persons coming within the purview of the criminal justice system. Indeed, deriving its strength from Constitutional provisions, Indian jurisprudence finds itself in complete harmony with the approaches inducted in the norms and guidelines of the United Nations in this sphere. This, in turn, has enhanced the need to bring about improvements in operational strategies governing the prevention and treatment of crime. Naturally, therefore, international standards are being occasionally invoked in pleading the cause of persons in custody. For instance, in "*Sunil Batra vs Delhi Administration* (1979)", the Supreme Court of India made a pointed reference to the United Nations Minimum Standard Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. Similarly, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights has also been referred to in dilating on the rights of persons in custody. While emphasising "the ploughing of the social resources helpful to human treatment and mainstreaming of prisoners into community as willing members of a law abiding society", the Court has directed the State to take the necessary steps to keep up to these Rules, especially with regard to work and wages, treatment with dignity, community contacts and correctional services. Taking support from the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Court declared that the rights of prisoners shall be protected by its writ jurisdiction plus contempt power.

Correctional administration is beset with challenges as never before, both at ideological and operational levels. Correction in itself has yet to crystallize as a total concept, to be generally acceptable as a scientifically verified and tested method of crime control. It lacks conviction of the functionaries themselves, the ambivalent attitude on the part of the public notwithstanding. It smacks of a compromise with the newly emerging thrust towards human

rights of persons in custody rather than an in-born commitment of the penal administrator. The humanitarian impulse behind correctional approach is, perhaps, too strong for the garb to be shed-off; the penal system too antiquated and weakened to fit in. However, the correctional philosophy of criminal justice is a precious acquisition of civilised man—a symbol of his evolution from the law of the jungle to enlightened social justice. There is no other choice than to strive and to realise the goal of correction in the modern context and no cost would ever be greater than the quality of life man cherishes. The task certainly involves a massive endeavour to narrow down and to bridge the gap between thinking and action, rhetorics and realities. In a society riddled with class disparities and social prejudices, where most of the persons recognised as offenders are more of victims than perpetrators of crime, correctional strategies to reclaim man within each man cannot be undermined. The enunciated role could hardly be performed without a purposeful blending of State interventions with informal mechanisms and procedures to resolve conflicts by forging links among various sectors of social development. Correctional services have to stand on their own and to innovate approaches and action modalities, within our own meaning of socio-cultural and economic milieu. The future of correction would undoubtedly rest on the ability of human society to uphold the worth and dignity of life. If the war against crime cannot be won, it has to be fought for the sheer survival of human civilisation.

HIRA SINGH

NOTES

1. Government of India, *Report of the Indian Jail Committee 1919-20*
2. Government of India, *Report of the All India Jail Manual Committee 1957-59*
3. Government of India, *Report of the Working Group on Prisons in the Country 1972-73*

CRIME

Despite the fact that crime has been with us from the very beginning, there is little consensus in regard to what it means.¹ For long, premises underlying natural law have guided our view of crime. Natural law refers to a body of principles and rules that are assumed 'to be uniquely fitting for and binding upon any community of rational beings'.² The first known legal document, formulated around 1900 B C, the Code of Hammurabi, was more or less based on these premises. Likewise, these assumptions were central in the formulation of Roman law as well as Anglo-Saxon law. Any violation of these rules or codes is termed 'crime'. This kind of legal view of crime continues to dominate even contemporary thinking. For example, Tappan describes crime as 'an intentional act or omission in violation of criminal law committed without defense of justification, and sanctioned by the state as a felony or misdemeanour'.³

However, a legal view of crime is not wholly satisfactory. Laws have been often 'arbitrary', and the social perception of objectionable or acceptable behaviour has greatly differed in different times and places. This has led to several psychological and sociological approaches. Many have viewed crime as those behavioural forms of an individual which upset his mental equipoise.⁴ However plausible, such an interpretation of crime poses many conceptual and operational problems. Sociologically, crime is that which offends 'the conscience collective—the values held in common by the members of any relatively well-integrated social system'.⁵ Here, the point of reference clearly relates to social norms and mores. Nonetheless, social norms and rational behaviour are not necessarily coterminous. Owing to this and similar considerations a sociological interpretation of crime falls short of expectation.

Lately, emphasis has been laid on societal factors. Crime or deviance is not the quality of an act the person commits, writes Becker, but

rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an 'offender'.⁶ Emphasising the waywardness of the enforcement of laws, this approach, however, does not provide a logically or empirically satisfactory interpretation of crime.⁷

Owing to the relative lack of consensus, a kind of mixed socio-legal definition of crime is adopted at present. Usually, crime is regarded as that commission or omission of a maladjusted individual which disturbs the social order and which is assumed to be hostile to the larger and long-range interests of society. However, it may not be mistaken as an atypical or abnormal behaviour. Very much a human act and a social fact,⁸ crime may come about when a variety of individual, social and situational factors, otherwise innocuous, happen to converge. Indirectly, it may have even some functional value—redefining and reinforcing social norms, bringing about solidarity and the like.⁹

PATTERN OF CRIME

The nature and extent of crime in a society is regarded as a barometer of its health. Examining the incidence of crime in a geopolitical unit is, therefore, more than a pastime. However, such an exercise has to proceed along the official crime statistics which may not be always dependable. Presumably, all the offences that occur are not reported, and all the reported offences are not accordingly recorded.¹⁰ This leaves out a large area of 'dark figures of crime'.¹¹ Protagonists of the labelling theory go a step further to claim that crime-figures merely provide 'a record of police activities', indicate 'the socially recognised volume of crime', or represent 'the production figures' of the criminal justice system.¹² Yet, till alternatives emerge, the use of official crime statistics cannot be dispensed with. This apart, the broad uniformity with which they are compiled makes them usable at least for working out trends.

There is to hand no coherent history of crime in India. Probably historians have been

too occupied with macro issues to pay attention to a less distinguished subject like crime. Nonetheless, ancient accounts by Manu, Yagyavalkya and Kautilya amply reflect that treason, offences against religion (including witchcraft and sorcery), property and person—all were fairly rife in ancient India.¹³ In many instances, however, it was difficult to distinguish between crime (warranting judicial punishment) and sin (entailing self-penance), or between a civil offence and a criminal act. Further, in awarding a judicial sentence, the nature and the gravity of the offence were not the sole considerations, the caste of the victim as well as of the crime-doer also used to be a critical factor.¹⁴

The nature of crime during the Mughal period does not appear to be very different from what it was in the preceding centuries. Treason, felony and various forms of misdemeanours used to occur in sufficient frequency to engage the attention of the administration continually.¹⁵ Since the Islamic laws were predominant, the offences against religion (blasphemy, desecration of places of worship, etc.) had received greater importance.

With the advent of British rule, the history of crime is relatively better documented. There was a multitude of chieftains claiming sovereignty and terrorising the common populace.¹⁶ Often they would either themselves indulge in looting or patronise robbers.¹⁷ The fall of the Mughal power also saw the rise of a menace in the form of *pindars*.¹⁸ The problem of *thugs* was equally alarming.¹⁹ Central India, particularly the regions of Bundelkhand and the Chambal Valley were having yet another widespread problem organised banditry.²⁰ As such, the criminal law in the country was consolidated in the shape of the Indian Penal Code (in 1860) and the Criminal Procedure Code (in 1861).

At present, crime is officially grouped into two categories. Those offences which are of a serious nature and in which the police intervene on their own are called cognizable

offences These include offences against person (such as murder, arson, kidnapping, dacoity and rape), offences against property (such as burglary, theft, and cheating), and several others (such as practising untouchability and giving or accepting dowry) On the other hand, less serious offences are termed as noncognizable offences These, in turn, are also subdivided into two those which contravene the provisions of the IPC and those which violate 'special and local laws'

To many observers, the crime-situation in India may seem to be alarming For instance, in 1976, within the span of each passing hour, there were reported 488 offences under the IPC and the special and local laws This hourly average included 2 murders, 61 burglaries or thefts, 82 automobile violations, and 12 juvenile offences However, it may well be kept in mind that India is a vast and populous country The incidence of crime as reported above may not, therefore, be unduly excessive Nonetheless, the volume of crime in the preceding years has been increasing as shown in the Table 'A'

While on this theme, a reference may be made to social and economic offences Several social problems have been sought to be tackled through legislation Likewise, in recent times, a number of economic laws have been enacted to deal with problems like hoarding and profiteering, smuggling and foreign exchange racketeering, adulteration and misbranding, and monopolistic trade practices But the enforcement of these social and economic laws has been somewhat indifferent In view of this, such offences may not be getting adequately reflected in the crime-statistics

CRIME CAUSATION

There is no universally accepted theory in criminology Perhaps, crime is too complex a phenomenon to get encompassed by a single integrated theory What, therefore, appears to be feasible is to focus attention on particular crimes and the factors underlying them The equation between scarce means and unlimited ends is a major determinant in human

TABLE—A
Incidence of cognizable offences in India during 1965-1978

Year	Population (in crores)	Offences	Crime/ population ratio (per one lakh population)
1965	47.85	7,51,615	157.1
1966	48.91	7,94,733	162.5
1967	49.91	8,81,981	176.4
1968	51.11	8,62,016	168.7
1969	52.25	8,45,167	161.8
1970	53.43	9,55,422	178.8
1971	55.12	9,52,581	172.8
1972	56.35	9,84,773	174.8
1973	57.59	10,77,181	187.0
1974	58.83	11,92,277	202.7
1975	60.08	11,60,520	193.2
1976	61.33	10,93,807	178.4
1977*	62.58	12,30,954	202.5
1978*	63.84	12,73,564	205.4
Percentage change	33.7	69.4	30.7

Source - *Crime in India, 1976, 1977 and 1978* Bureau of Police Research and Development, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi

*Provisional figures

behaviour General poverty, destitution, unemployment, economic disparity and so forth have been brought up in relation to crime. Recently, an economic theory of crime has also been put forth, this reasserts, in essence, the concept of free will and economic motivation in criminal behaviour.²¹ On the other hand economic prosperity specially among the *nouveaux riche* has also received attention, particularly in relation to the problem of juvenile delinquency.²² Mention may be made here of Marx's economic determinism which underlines the importance of disparities in a class society.²³ While the significance of economic factors in criminal behaviour is recognised, they cannot be generalised.

The manner in which men and their affairs are managed has a bearing on crime. The

political ideology, values and institutions, the political system, elections and parties and the types of government, leaders and organisations—all profoundly influence the socio-political environment, and hence the nature and extent of crime. A higher incidence of crime in a phase of political instability, violence in a pre-election year, corruption and payoffs in a closed or dictatorial political set-up, and the like, have been reported.²⁴ Nevertheless, the linkage between political conditions and crime is not adequately researched. Many researchers have mentioned mental symptoms, neuroses, perversions and psychopathology in relation to crime. Others have underlined various personality factors including attitude, motivation, adjustment, frustration and frustration-reduction.²⁵

Likewise, several sociological factors important in the rise of delinquent or criminal behaviour have been highlighted. Folkways, customs, norms and mores in a community have been mentioned. The child-rearing practices, in particular, and the process of socialisation in general, in the family, are equally important. Then a reference is made to broken homes, and to households with one or more immoral deviant members. Similarly, the neighbourhood and school environment has also been mentioned. Much has been written about the role of media, specially in relation to juvenile delinquency. However, the correlation between the two is far from being settled.

The range of causal factors in crime is, thus, nothing short of bewildering. The less hopeful in criminology tend to view the crime-causation as 'a lost cause'²⁶ and the more hopeful adopt 'a multi-causation approach', using a combination of economic, psychological and sociological factors for explaining criminal behaviour.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OFFENDERS

The point as to who violate law frequently is of more than academic interest. A purely legalistic approach tends to ignore the social, economic and psychological characteristics of

the persons who come in conflict with law,²⁷ although such an exercise is helpful in chalking out a viable crime-prevention policy. Reportedly, offenders differ markedly in terms of race,²⁸ sex,²⁹ rural-urban inhabitation³⁰ and economic status.³¹ In the Indian context, the position is a little different. Most of those who are arrested for various offences are males (more than 95 percent) and come from rural areas (about 95 percent). But in terms of other socio-economic characteristics, offenders may differ from region to region. However, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive estimate as the official records in this respect are of little help. Table B presents the data from three studies conducted in the late seventies.³²

It is seen that most inmates in jails who have been convicted for different offences are Hindus, belong either to a scheduled caste or a tribe, are less educated, have an agrarian background and have a low household income. It may thus be inferred that most offenders who are committed to jails come from the lower socio-economic strata. Perhaps, the lower strata of society have conditions which facilitate violation of law. Or else, those who belong to these strata are more easily identified (labelled?), processed, and sentenced.

CRIMINALITY AMONG WOMEN

The female sex is way behind the male in committing crime 'in all nations, all communities within a nation, all age groups, all periods of history and all types of crimes'.³³ This is even more applicable to India. The proportion of females arrested for crimes in the country is not only small (among every twenty persons arrested, only one is a woman) but it is also among the lowest in the world.³⁴ Why is it so? To a great extent, the female physiology restrains women from indulging in aggressive behaviour. What is however more pertinent is the socio-cultural milieu which tacitly prescribes in-door, background and subdued roles for the womenfolk.³⁵ All these factors limit female social interaction and, consequently, their share in the volume of

TABLE—B
Socio-economic characteristics of inmates of jails (percentages)

	Jail		
	Lucknow (N = 337)	Madras (N = 95)	Sagar (N = 201)
Religion			
Christian	0.6	10.5	—
Hindu	80.4	85.3	95.5
Jain	—	—	0.5
Muslim	18.1	4.2	3.0
Sikhs	0.9	—	1.0
Caste			
Brahmin	15.9	6.2	15.4
Kshatriya	15.9	13.5	42.3
Vaishya	2.2	—	3.8
Scheduled Caste	65.1	80.0	30.0
Scheduled Tribe	0.9	—	8.5
Literacy			
Illiterate	47.5	27.4	41.8
Upto primary	30.3	24.7	31.3
Upto secondary	8.9	35.8	17.4
Secondary and above	13.3	12.6	9.3
Occupation			
Agriculture	84.3	NA	56.7
Business	5.0	—	10.0
Service	2.4	—	7.9
Daily wage earner	2.9	—	16.9
NA/NR	5.3	—	8.5
House-hold income (in rupees)			
Below 250	26.1	25.4	34.3
250-499	26.4	45.3	34.3
500-749	14.5	—	12.9
750-999	8.0	29.5	4.0
1,000 and above	19.9	—	—
NA/NR	5.1	—	6.5

crime. At the same time, there are writers who contend that the transgression of law by the womenfolk is also ignored and covered up³⁶

To the extent females are involved in crime, their involvement may be subdivided into two: (a) female specific crimes (abortion, infanticide, prostitution, etc.), and (b) general crimes. Seemingly, the cover-up in the case of the former is more than in the latter. In 1975, about 24,000 women were arrested for various IPC-offences which accounts for only 1.7 percent of the total arrests. In this, the main offences³⁷ include thefts,³⁸ riots, burglary, murder and kidnapping/abduction. It may be however kept in mind that the crime-pattern varies from region to region.

Notwithstanding the limited nature of crime amongst women, two observations in the Indian context appear to be in order. Since a woman is the hub in a family having a profound influence on the children, female criminality is socially viewed more seriously. Along with this, the incidence of female criminality is reportedly on the increase.³⁹

WHITE-COLLAR CRIMES

The nature and extent of white-collar crimes is likely to make those sit back who are given to the belief that most crime-doers are from the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder. More than three decades ago, Sutherland drew attention to this problem and observed that respectable well-to-do persons during the course of their occupational activities are found guilty of numerous violations of the criminal law.⁴⁰ White-collar crimes are illegal acts committed by non-physical means and by concealment or guile, to obtain money or property or to avoid loss of money or property or to obtain business or personal advantage.⁴¹ They have many features which set them apart from conventional offences. The intent to commit a wrongful act is open and unmistakable. The perpetrators disguise the purpose and make a deliberate attempt to conceal the crime. They think out in advance of arguments and rationalisations, prepare

deceptive documents and are prepared for restitution. In the main, they rely on the ignorance, carelessness and/or acquiescence of the victims. Consequently, the visibility of white-collar crimes is lamentably low.⁴²

It is difficult to provide any dependable estimate as to the extent of white-collar crimes.⁴³ Nevertheless, by way of illustration, the main forms of white-collar crimes may be listed. They include (i) padding of company accounts to accommodate payoffs, kickbacks or personal expenses, falsification of inventory, invoices and payments, and tempering with the balance-sheet to evade taxes, (ii) anti-trust violations including those by companies/corporations and by stock-exchanges, (iii) unethical professional practices by doctors (false medical certificates, unnecessary treatment procedures so as to exact additional fees, etc.), practising lawyers (prolonging court-cases, inflating costs to the clients, etc.), and by chartered accountants conniving at corporate malfeasance. There are many writers who include frauds and even economic offences in this category.

There is no denying the fact that white-collar crimes are more consequential than conventional offences. On the one hand, they are difficult to identify, investigate and prosecute and, on the other, they have grave implications for the different subsystems of society. They thrive best in a stable democratic society which, ironically enough, they deeply undermine. As in a developing democratic country like India, they are likely to further proliferate, there is an urgent need to initiate early action to stem them.

PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF CRIME

'Societal reaction' to 'objectionable and bothersome' forms of behaviour has been a logical corollary. Measures of social control have been evolved 'by which individuals are taught, persuaded or compelled to conform to the usages and life-values of groups'.⁴⁴ These acquire shape and substance in the form of various institutions.

Role of legislation In keeping with the axiom, *Nullum crimen sine lege nulla poene sine lege* (No crime or punishment without law), legislation provides the framework for social intervention in criminal violations. It has to be embedded in collective wisdom rather than based on subjective preferences or intuitive morality. In principle, precepts and terms, laws usually reflect precision, deliberation and logical consistency and, consequently, they enjoy a measure of legitimacy and durability.⁴⁵

The evolution of present-day criminal law in India is more or less a transplantation, the ancient socio-legal traditions notwithstanding. The Greek, Semitic, Assyrian and Egyptian traditions influenced the Roman Law which, in turn, underlay Anglo-Saxon law, and the British during their rule introduced it in the country. It is accusatorial as contrasted to the Napoleonic inquisitorial approach. In the country, law and order is a subject on which both the Central and State Governments legislate. In recent times, there has been a multiplicity of laws which, on occasions, appears to be somewhat unmanageable.

As part of the normative structure of society, criminal legislation has a crucial role. It strengthens peace and tranquility, and promotes collective happiness and progress in society. Secondly, legislation brings about uniformity in interpersonal relations. Thirdly, it encourages conformity in social interaction by discouraging disruptive or criminal behaviour. Fourthly, since it has 'teeth', it is capable of teaching a lesson to disturbing individuals. Lastly, social norms are usually the precursors of legislation, yet legislation may also lead to social norms. Progressive laws like the Civil Rights Act, the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, the Anti-corruption Act, and the Dowry Prohibition Act illustrate the point.

Role of the Police Next to the family, the police occupy the most strategic position in crime-prevention. In the fight against crime, they are the first line of defence. They are organised for the direction and implementation

of societal response to crime.⁴⁶ In India, in the later half of the nineteenth century, the police were organised after the Irish model.⁴⁷ Under the existing system, their organisation is under the overall authority and direction of the States. Functionally, at the State level and below, the police are grouped into District Executive Force, Armed Police, Railway Police, Criminal Investigation Department and so forth. Of late, some para-police organisations like Home Guards have also come up. Besides the State police, there are Central Police Organisations (CPOs), as well, which from time to time undertake policing work. These include the Border Security Force, the Central Bureau of Investigation, the Central Reserve Police, the Industrial Security Force and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police. In 1977, the police organisations at the State level had about 7,50,000 functionaries, and the CPO's about 5,00,000.

The role of the police in crime prevention can hardly be over-emphasised. Through preventive patrolling and prompt investigation of crime, they directly curb crime. Their specialised wings such as Traffic Control Department, Juvenile Aid Bureau and Vice Squad further strengthen law and order.⁴⁸

Role of the Judiciary. The determination of innocence or guilt in primitive societies used to be presumably an easy affair. In a society committed to democracy and to the rule of law, the judicial system is highly complex.⁴⁹ The concepts of fair and free trial, burden of proof on prosecution, presumption of innocence and benefit of doubt to the accused, ensure that the guilty would be brought to book only after due process of law.⁵⁰ In India, courts functioning at all levels, including magisterial courts, sessions courts, High Courts, and the Supreme Court, are independent of the legislature and the executive. In 1975, their number was 3,559, 1,281, 17 and 1, respectively.

However, courts may not be taken as mere justice-dispensing agencies. By sifting the innocent from the guilty, they uphold the rule

of law, and by convicting the crime-doers they reinforce the contention that crime does not pay and set the deviant on a course of re-education. In doing so, the judiciary makes an invaluable contribution to crime prevention.

Role of the Community. Crime as a social problem is inter-woven with almost every aspect of community living.⁵¹ Therefore, the criminal justice system alone cannot tackle it. This is where the role of the community in crime prevention assumes pointed significance. As a sociological entity comprising individuals living in family groups in an interdependent relationship, the community lends more than a helping hand in crime prevention.

Generally speaking, the community contributes to crime prevention in two ways. By providing congenial neighbourhood atmosphere, adequate educational facilities, healthy recreational outlets, guidance and counselling services and so forth, it makes an enduring healthy impact on the community life which, in turn, keeps the incidence of delinquency and crime under check. Next, the citizens and community directly participate in crime prevention. They play an important role in the early identification of disturbing elements, in the detection and investigation of offences, in successfully bringing the offender to book by testifying in court and in the rehabilitation of offenders.

In ancient India, community participation in crime prevention used to be sizeable. *Panchayats* (village councils) and *nyaya panchayats* (village courts) used to keep a watch on individual behaviour and settle disputes at the grass-roots level, expeditiously and inexpensively.⁵² During the Mughal period as well as under British rule, these institutions declined. After Independence, efforts have been made to revive them. However, at present, their role in crime prevention is limited.

There is no dearth of formal community organisations in the country. Organisations like the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association,

the Rotary Club, the Lions' Club, and the JC's have been functioning for decades. The Ramakrishna Mission has been doing laudable welfare work. Similarly the Association for Social Health in India and the Mahila Samaj have also been active in helping the disadvantaged women and girls. But these organisations do not directly concern themselves with crime prevention. The All-India Crime Prevention Society has been in existence for several years, but its impact has been limited.⁵³ The Children Aid Society, Bombay, has been doing much to deflect juveniles from the delinquent path, however, its sphere of activities has been at best regional. On the whole, the role of the community in crime prevention appears to be geographically as uneven as it has been insufficient.

TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION

In dealing with offenders, there is seen at present a marked shift from the punitive to the reformatory approach. This has come about due to several historical and philosophical reasons. At present, the term punishment has been replaced by or is taken to imply treatment, although it is doubtful whether in processing offenders the punitive approach has been wholly eliminated.

The underlying objectives of the treatment approach are well-known. First, the offender may be incapacitated through certain restraint so that society is protected from further harm. Secondly, he himself may be shielded from the baneful conditions that drove him to criminal ways. Thirdly, he may be afforded programmes which would modify his lifestyle in consonance with the social realities. Lastly, towards his reintegration in society he may be helped to bring about a meaningful adjustment.⁵⁴

Although the process by which the offender may be reformed and rehabilitated is still a matter of dispute,⁵⁵ the measures currently available are conventionally termed as institutional and non-institutional services. From Elizabethan Poor Houses to modern

reformatories, 'jails' have covered a large distance. They have no longer remained mere centres for incarceration. Their organisation has been restructured to meet the reformatory objectives (in 1978, the country had 74 Central Jails, 237 District Jails, 844 Sub-jails, 1 Model Jail, 3 Women's Jails, 26 Open-Jails and 20 Special Jails, besides, there were 22 Borstals and about 101 Approved/Certified Schools for juveniles). On an average day, they house between them about 2,00,000 inmates. Apart from boarding, lodging, clothing and medical facilities, they offer such correctional programmes as education, vocational training, religious education, recreation and self-government.⁵⁶ To motivate inmates towards improved behaviour and conduct, incentives like remission, furlough, parole and wages for productive participation in work programmes⁵⁷ are offered.

Of late, the ability of jails to reform offenders has been seriously questioned.⁵⁸ In 1980, the Sixth United Nations Congress on Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders deliberated *inter alia* on de-institutionalisation.

Non-institutional services have certain advantages over institutional ones. The offender/inmate is kept away from the incessant psychological pressure of the four walls of the jail. He is also not exposed to the 'dehumanising' influence which many a jail exerts. His time is put to a more productive use. The less regimented and more free atmosphere in non-institutional services provide greater motivation for reform. Involved in this also are the family and the community to which he ultimately returns and adjusts with.

The practice of probation which John Augustus started in Boston in 1841 is simple.⁵⁹ Even when the offender is found guilty and the sentence of imprisonment is pronounced he is allowed to return to his family and community under the supervision of an officer of the court. Usually, this is done when the offender is relatively young, he has committed the offence for the first time and the offence is not

very serious. The practice of probation was introduced in India in the late 1920's. At present, it is granted under the Probation of Offenders Act, the Children Act, and such other legislative provisions. Parallel to probation, parole is granted by jails throughout the country to the inmates who have served a portion of their term satisfactorily. After-care services are also available in the form of cash, kind or counselling. Apart from these, many other forms of community-based corrections are being successfully tried in America and Europe. In India, however, not much thought or resources have been devoted in this direction. Indeed, non-institutional measures of treatment and rehabilitation for select categories of offenders are advantageous provided systematic supervision is exercised.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Having outlined the crime-phenomenon, the offender characteristics and crime-prevention strategies, an attempt may now be made to look into what possibly lies in store in the time to come. Crime, observes William Clifford, is the shadow of civilization.⁶⁰ Hence, it is difficult to be hopeful that the coming time will be relatively crime-free, the chances are remote. The crime rate in the country did show some signs of decline in 1969, 1971 and 1976, yet the overall trend has been unmistakably upward. This is by no means specific to India, the trend is global. What is, however, specific to India is its developing character. There is, comments Lopez-Ray, a disturbing correlation between economic development and the incidence of crime.⁶¹ The pursuit of 'GNP', as denoted by brisk industrial and economic activity, often blurs the vision of a balanced social growth, bringing in its wake a chain of dubious practices, many of which may be anti-social and may be eating away sizeable portions of scarce development funds.

Category-wise, too, a few shifts in the crime pattern are foreseeable. While traditional offences (murder, arson and theft) may persist with little or no change, they are likely to be

overshadowed by 'modern' offences such as white-collar crimes, economic offences and group offences. The nexus between modernity and white-collar crimes is too obvious to need any amplification. Economic offences including trade malpractices, corporate malfeasance, smuggling, currency manipulation and tax evasion, which affect the material well-being of the community as a whole, are likely to proliferate. With democracy duly entrenched, many sections of the population may increasingly confuse liberty with licence and may take, on the slightest pretext, to group agitation with violent overtones, creating frequent and serious law and order problems.

Notwithstanding the radical perspectives in criminology, the existing conventional approaches to crime and the criminal are likely to persist. Given this consideration, various sectors of the criminal justice system including the police, the prosecution, the judiciary and the corrections, need to be streamlined. A scientific study of their existing as well as future roles, necessary allocations of resources, and systematic evaluation of their cost-effectiveness are likely to stand the country in good stead to meet the challenges in the coming decades.

While strengthening or planning for criminal justice, the point may not be lost sight of that crime, as a social phenomenon, permeates all walks of life, and that the line of demarcation between a criminal and a non-criminal is rather thin. Within the framework of the criminal justice system, is there room to plan for human values, civic sense, respectable public service conduct, business norms, or professional ethics? This brings home the realisation that economic, social and crime-prevention planning need to be concurrent and intermeshed. It follows that the planners from grass-roots to the highest level should be sensitised to the implications of the crime problem for society in general, and for economic development in particular, and that crime-prevention planning should be made an inseparable component of the overall social development strategy.

MUHAMMAD ZAHIR KHAN

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DACOITY

The Oxford English Dictionary defines dacoity as robbery with violence committed by a gang. In the United Kingdom robbery is considered a felony. It is regarded as an equally serious crime in the United States of America. In India, in addition to robbery, we also have the offence of dacoity. It would not be without interest to mention that the word dacoity is etymologically of Indian origin. Both robbery and dacoity are committed with pecuniary motives and both are accompanied by the show or use of force. What differentiates the two is the number of crime-doers. To be specific, when five or more persons conjointly commit robbery, they become culpable for dacoity under the Indian Penal Code (IPC). In view of modern sophisticated firearms and the threat they pose in the hands of desperadoes to life and limb, the distinction between robbery and dacoity has become somewhat outdated. Contextual reality demands that the two should be discussed as one, despite the legal difference. Hence the term dacoity in the present paper is used to cover both robbery and dacoity.

Few crimes would match dacoity as far as the open defiance of law is concerned. Premeditated in nature, it is perpetrated for gain. What is more, it is a crime which is both an offence against property and against person. Implicit in dacoity is robbery which in turn has the element of theft and extortion. To put a person into fear of injury so as to deliver any property or valuable is extortion (Indian Penal Code, Section 383). Extortion is robbery if the offender, while committing the offence, puts the victim in fear of hurt or death (Sec. 390). Dacoity (robbery conjointly committed by five or more persons) may be of many types: (i) simple dacoity (Sec. 395), (ii) dacoity armed with lethal weapons (Sec. 398), (iii) dacoity with grievous hurt (Sec. 397), and (iv) dacoity with murder (Sec. 396). Official statistics, however, lump all these together. Dacoity is a cognizable offence under the IPC. Statistically speaking, its share in the volume of crime is not

very large. In the year 1979, it was 1.8 per cent and 4.6 per cent when cases of robbery are added to it. However, it is not the incidence but the terror it spreads in the populace which makes it a serious offence.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The offence of dacoity is as old as human civilisation. In the Indian context, there is mention of dacoits in the *Rigveda*. *Styas* committed theft often accompanied by the use of force.¹ In the *Mahabharata*, the term *dasyu* has been used which implies both thieves and robbers;² in the Jain canonical literature it is *Lomahara*.³ In *Dharmashastras*, there are several references to the misdeeds of dacoits.⁴ *Smritis* are a little more specific in this regard. For example, the *Naradasmṛiti* has explicit references about wayfarers being waylaid by robbers; the *Bṛhaspatismṛiti*, about kidnapping of children for ransom, and *Manusmṛiti*, about robbers decamping with cattleheads.⁵ Through the writings of Kalidasa we learn that routes were not wholly safe; people would travel in caravans often escorted by soldiers.⁶ Kautilya's *Arthashastra* provides ample evidence of the existence of robbers and dacoits in his time and prescribes severe and graduated punishment for them.⁷ *Ramayana* by Valmiki contains accounts of villages being rampaged by brigands.

The famous traveller Hsien Tsang who visited India in the first half of the seventh century has recorded occurrences relating to waylaying and river-piracy. He himself was once molested by robbers near Sialkot.⁸ Likewise, the celebrated historian, Alberuni (973-1048 AD), has also recorded depredations by bands of robbers. In all likelihood, many of them might have been fugitives of law, as accounts by the historians suggest that these bands were mostly based in jungles.⁹ The problem of dacoity persisted even when the country had a relatively stable government and administration. Emperor Sher Shah had to organise outposts manned by soldiers along the main routes and highways to protect travelling officials and the public. The decline of Mughal

power brought in its wake unsettled conditions and administrative chaos, generating much lawlessness, including banditry.¹⁰ In certain regions, it was at times difficult to differentiate between a *Jagirdar* and a brigand or between a suzerain and a dacoit. Often, successful robbers and dacoits were accepted in due course as rulers or even potentates.¹¹ With reference to central India, Temple observes "Almost all ruling chiefs in this part of India are of modern origin sprung from anarchy Scindias who became ruler of Gwalior, Holkars of Indore, the Ponwars of Dhar and Dewas were the most successful commanders of such colonies, while many petty states and mediated states are also relics of these plundering and lawless immigrants"¹²

As is well known, the British came to India for trade and commerce but gradually, by the close of the eighteenth century, they assumed the administration of a vast territory. It is about this time that they faced the problem posed by the *Pindaris*. Mounted hordes of freebooters, they used to undertake long excursions ransacking village after village, leaving behind trails of destruction and death. However, in the *Pindaris*, "The British saw the challenge", as Jatar and Khan observe, "to their expanding military and political influence in India. Lord Hastings did not fail to take note of them. He brought the native princes round to adopt a hard line towards the *Pindaris* and launched a sizable military campaign against them. By the early nineteenth century, the *Pindari* bands had been markedly subdued".¹³ There was also the problem of *thugs* or the garotters. Like *Pindaris*, *thugs* had much in common with present day dacoits. Further, their atrocious deeds were mixed up with certain beliefs. A Thuggee and Dacoity Suppression Department was organised. William Sleeman, a British Administrator, made concerted efforts and succeeded in eradicating the problem.¹⁴

After the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857, the British became officially aware of certain tribal groups spread all over the country, members of which

used to take to unlawful ways almost like a vocation. For example, many able-bodied *Kanjars* used to conjoin to undertake night forays in distant villages. The appearance of the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 was one of the measures to curb the activities of these lawless tribes.¹⁵

Official reports such as the Annual Administration Reports of Police Departments relating to the preceding as well as the present century bring out that robbery and dacoity were a regular and country-wide feature. A hundred years ago, although the media of mass communication were not so developed, quite a few desperadoes had earned notoriety. A few studies relating to Bundelkhand and the Chambal Valley provide accounts of prominent dacoits and their nefarious activities. In Bundelkhand, Deshpai (eliminated in 1863) had created much terror. The activities of dacoits like Raghunath Singh, Durga Singh, Jagat Singh, Pratap Singh, Vikramajeet Singh and many more were so ruthless that the army had to be called out to suppress them. The region was far from being quiet in the twentieth century, though only Pooran Singh and Moorat Singh (both surrendered in 1972) earned notoriety.

In the Chambal Valley the dacoits who became notorious included Surat Ram (eliminated in 1875), Jumpa and Budha (eliminated in 1877), Ganga Prasad Singh (eliminated in 1885), Ratan Sahai, Suraj Bah Thakur (eliminated in 1887), Chatra Gujar (eliminated in 1888), Bihari and Badal Singh (eliminated in 1893). So formidable was Sultan Singh and his gang that in 1894 the Jhansi Police arrived at an understanding with him that he could visit his family provided he did not commit dacoity in the Jhansi area. Mohan Kachhi (eliminated in 1899) and his horde were known for ruthless dacoities executed with speed and cunning. Mention may also be made of Chakrapan (eliminated in 1930) and Nabha and Kalla (eliminated in 1937). Harjan Singh (eliminated in 1939) used to castrate his victims. The Doongar-Batri gang operated in the valley for about twenty-five years (Batri

died in 1930 and Doongar was shot dead in 1940) Their gang is often credited for introducing to dacoity the technique of kidnapping for ransom Man Singh had become a legend in his own life-time. In the post-independence era, Man Singh (eliminated in 1955) and many other outlaws became known for their misdeeds These mainly include Rupa (eliminated in 1959), Gabbar Singh (eliminated in 1959) and Lakhan Singh (eliminated in 1960) The wily dancing girl, Putli, when she turned into a dacoit, became the scourge of the Valley. However her career was short and she was shot dead in 1958 Both Mohar Singh and Madho Singh had formidable gangs equipped with modern weapons, nevertheless, they surrendered in 1972 It may be added that persistence of the rapacious and violent crime of dacoity is not surprising What is surprising, however, are the romantic ideas often associated with notorious dacoits¹⁶

NATURE AND EXTENT

As stated earlier, dacoity and robbery differ little in motive, modus-operandi, victimisation and impact, and that the difference between the two is only one of the number of crime-doers involved. Yet another clarification which may be offered relates to the difference between *actual* dacoity and *technical* dacoity The disgruntled progeny may forcibly decamp with disputed ancestral property Similarly, the contenders may forcibly harvest the crop on disputed agricultural land Such acts are often classified as dacoity; nevertheless, they are essentially *technical* dacoities

It may be reiterated that dacoities are committed with the show or use of force Early in the nineteenth century, *lathis*, spears, swords and other sharpened instruments were the main weapons.¹⁷ Gradually, percussion muskets, rifles, revolvers and even sub-automatic and automatic weapons found their way to areas infested with dacoits¹⁸

We may now turn our attention to the nature and forms of dacoity committed by brigands.

Raid for pillage has been the usual form of dacoity This includes mainly land and river piracy Murder in the commission of offence of dacoity cannot be ruled out. Dacoits have also engaged themselves in the killing of victims to put down resistance (Rupa killed more than 200 inhabitants during the course of his career) Dacoits have also adopted tactics of terrorisation to induce fear among the inhabitants For quite some time dacoits have switched to the novel technique of kidnapping for ransom, involving lesser risk and more gain Nevertheless, in the course of commission of dacoity, beating, hurt and extortion are not rare Dacoits are also known to collect *chanda* (forced donation) from the inhabitants and accept *tika* (protection money) from forest, road and building contractors and businessmen.¹⁹

Waylaying the thoroughfare was a common method of dacoity in ancient and medieval times In modern times, too, passenger buses freight trucks and other vehicles have occasionally to face the problem of dacoity. What is more, dacoits of late, have ransacked and hijacked passenger buses and trains. Western style holdups of commercial establishments, petrol pumps, post offices, railway booking offices and banks have also been adopted

The incidence of dacoity is not confined to a particular region although certain States like Manipur, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Nagaland, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam and Madhya Pradesh have a higher incidence of the crime Furthermore, dacoity is a predominantly rural crime, urban areas have distinctly lower incidence²⁰ There are some regions which are noted for the incidence of dacoity. Bundelkhand, the Chambal Valley and several tribal areas including those in the north-eastern region show up prominently in crime statistics relating to dacoity

What is the extent of the problem? Cases of robbery and dacoity as registered by the police during 1965-79 are given in Table 'A' below

TABLE—A
Incidence of robbery and dacoity in India

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population (in crores)</i>	<i>Number of cases of robbery</i>	<i>Number of cases of dacoity</i>	<i>Total</i>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1965	47 85	8,067	4,955	13,022
1966	48 91	8,585	4,817	13,402
1967	49 91	10,252	6,357	16,609
1968	51 11	10,194	6,357	16,551
1969	52 25	9,922	6,049	15,971
1970	53 43	16,958	9,337	26,295
1971	55 12	18,402	11,193	29,595
1972	56 35	17,054	10,411	27,465
1973	57 59	18,857	10,627	29,484
1974	58 83	22,286	13,697	35,983
1975	60 08	21,656	12,506	34,162
1976	61 33	17,974	10,910	28,884
1977	62 58	22,725	12,599	35,324
1978*	63 84	21,698	12,016	33,714
1979*	65 10	21,597	12,706	34,303

Source *Crime in India*, Bureau of Police Research and Development, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi

* Figures are provisional

It can be seen that the maximum number of robberies were committed in 1977, and of dacoities in 1974. However, data need to be examined in relation to population. The worst year appears to be 1974, when for every one lakh of population 3.80 robberies and 2.33 dacoities were committed. The succeeding year, 1975, was a shade more peaceful; still the average was 3.60 robberies and 2.10 dacoities.

CAUSATIVE FACTORS

For quite some time attempts have been made to explain criminal tendency and behaviour in terms of physical characteristics, psychological factors, social environment and the like, but with little success. Evidence is recurrent that the rapid pace of economic development escalates crime in general and violence in particular. However, in an offence like dacoity, the underlying causes may differ from place to place and situation to situation.

Environmental factors play an important facilitating role. Natural hideouts like hilly terrains, forest tracts and ravines may tacitly

encourage many a person to violate and run away from law. Rivers and lagoons in southern India and forests and ravines in the Chambal Valley illustrate the point.²¹ The anonymity offered by the metropolitan centres may have a similar contributory role. This may, in part, explain the rise in kidnapping for ransom and bank hold-ups in several urban centres.

In many communities, specially the ex-criminal or denotified ones, socio-cultural traditions have had a hand in this regard and a large number of members of these communities were engaged in thefts, etc. as a source of livelihood. In some regions there is tolerance for crimes like cattle theft and even robbery. There are still other regions which have more or less a 'tradition' of aggression and violence. Group prejudices like family feuds, caste rivalry, and tribal conflicts may also have a catalytic role.²²

Economic deprivation may also have a role to play, with little productive land and no settled occupation, many persons may violate law on the slightest pretext.

In the Chambal Valley, the process of soil erosion leading to the formation of ravines is shrinking arable land, aggravating the economic crisis.²³ Similarly, undeveloped economic resources in several hilly and forest areas may offer little attraction to tribals for settled community life.

Conflicts, tensions and competitiveness between individuals and groups, to some extent, has been intensified due to certain political processes. The principle of universal franchise, democratic decentralisation, multiple party-system and periodical elections may be mentioned in this context. In several areas political differences have been confused with personal differences and political competition with unlawful conflict. Still worse, many political aspirants are believed not to have hesitated from enlisting the help of outlaws for augmenting their political fortunes.²⁴

Attention may be turned to a few administrative factors as well. Land and civil disputes may take years or even decades to be decided in courts of law. This may force many persons to take the law into their own hands. The working of the police may not also be lost sight of. They may not be in a position to provide adequate protection to citizens reporting a dacoity or testifying against a dacoit. Allegations are sometimes made against the police itself being in league with outlaws,²⁵ taking a soft line against them.

Yet another administrative factor relates to the procurement of arms and ammunition. One needs a licence in the country to possess a firearm, firearms of certain calibre (303 field rifle, brengun, sten gun, hand grenade, etc.) are prohibited. Nonetheless, these do reach the desperadoes. Radio, walkie-talkie, binoculars and automobiles, not to speak of modern weapons, have markedly helped desperadoes in their activities.

Lastly, the significance of psychological factors should be kept in view. The factors mentioned earlier are important, yet in taking to dacoity, the individual and his attitudes, values and life-goals play their roles.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

For a systematic understanding of causative factors and for evolving viable neutralisation strategies, it is important to look into the socio-economic background of dacoits. Are they social relegates economically deprived?

In relation to a country of the size of India and a widely distributed offence like dacoity, it is difficult to generalise about the background of the perpetrators of this crime. It is bound to differ from region to region. Furthermore, dependable accounts about their background are few. A few studies which are available relate to the Chambal Valley.

As would be expected, most of the dacoits come from a rural background. To commit dacoity, much less to turn an outlaw, a rugged temperament is required. That is why dacoity has not attracted many women. Putli and Phulan Devi have earned notoriety not so much for their ferocity or tenacity as for the fact of their being women. In any case, the presence of women in this gruesome activity is an exception rather than a rule.²⁶

Likewise, to commit dacoities regularly and to become a proclaimed offender demands physical hardiness. Often, outlaws have to spend days and months in jungles and ravines and are pursued by the police days on end. It is thus understandable as to why the very young and the very old keep away from dacoity. Evidence shows that most of the dacoits are in the age group of 20-40. This contention, however, may not be wholly true with those who age as dacoits. For example, in the Chambal Valley, Tania Singh was arrested in 1929 when he was more than 70 years old and Doongar Sahai was shot dead in 1940 at the age of about 65.²⁷

As the predominant religion is Hinduism, it is hardly surprising that most of the dacoits are Hindus. Christians, Jains, Muslims and Sikhs only rarely figure as notorious dacoits. Contrary to popular notions, it is not only members of the Kshatriya caste groups who have overwhelmingly taken to dacoity. The involvement of Brahmins, Gujars and Kachhis

(herdsmen and agriculturists), Mallahs (boatmen) and the like has been equally sizable. Several intermittent gangs have been led by castes lower in the traditional caste hierarchy like Gaderia (graziers), Sheharia (junglemen) and Chamars (cobbler). Many desperadoes have been reported to be devout worshippers of Durgamata.²⁸

To the extent dacoits have a rural origin, most of them have agriculture as their main or front occupation. Bihari Singh, father of the infamous Man Singh, was an agriculturist who also dealt in stolen property. Although Madho Singh served in the army, he also had ancestral landed property. The socio-economic background of the dacoits hardly indicates that they are necessarily downtrodden or economically hard-pressed.

GANG DYNAMICS

Gang formation and functioning, specially in the Chambal Valley, are the result of several 'push' and 'pull' factors. Push factors relate mainly to family environment, little attraction for settled life, urge for revenge, and so forth. On the other hand, pull factors in gang formation include martial tradition, opportunity for unbridled ego-satisfaction, the desire for achievement of status, thrill, and the excitement of life in forests and ravines.²⁹

Established gangs are, however, suspicious towards strangers seeking entry into the gang. The procedure for admitting aspirants into a gang are unwritten but stringent. At the same time, it is not possible for a lone operator to survive police action and benefit from plunder. Those who seek entry into gangs can be grouped mainly into two categories: (i) drifting types and (ii) those who suddenly decide to become outlaws. The qualifications for entry into gangs are mainly family background, caste and physical fitness. Besides, there are desirable qualifications such as experience in the army and the police, possession of a modern firearm and the like. Of course, gangs do not take risk and cross-check the antecedents of aspirants before accepting them.³⁰

Usually, conditions are created so that an entrant becomes known to the inhabitants and the police as an outlaw. He is taken on a raid, his identity is announced to the victims by shouting his name, he is made to shoot the people and so forth in order to reduce security risk for the gang and the chances of his reversion to normal society.³¹

There are no fixed or formal training courses offered to new entrants in the gang. Nevertheless, organised gangs have certain conventions. A fresher is (i) assigned odd jobs, (ii) instructed in the handling of firearms, (iii) assigned scout duties, (iv) required to keep vigil while the gang is out on raid, and (v) asked to handle loot or the kidnapped persons. If he possesses a firearm or is able to borrow one from the gang, he also participates in actual dacoity. If he survives, he attains the status of a dacoit. Indeed, instances are not rare when the entrants revert or defect from the gang. Such candidates are dealt with severely.³²

Gangs are mainly of two types: (i) intermittent gangs, and (ii) established gangs. The former are irregular and diffused and free lance with a shifting structure. They take to banditry as a part time profession. The established gangs consist mainly of those outlaws who are committed to dacoity as a profession. The gang strength usually fluctuates, ranging from two to three members to as many as 250 members. Gang leaders are usually self appointed and have the last word on matters affecting the gang. There are core members or lieutenants in a gang who have a higher status than other members. Communications are usually direct between the gang leader and the other members of the gang. Most gangs carry minimal bedding, light utensils, uncooked ration, electric torches and water bottles. A few well-to-do gangs have also been reported as having walkie-talkie sets, binoculars, transistor-radio sets and cameras. The main mode of transport is horse. They use usually military or police uniforms.³³

Gang strength is assessed by the quantity and quality of weapons. Gangs operating in the Chambal Valley have been reported to possess

modern firearms and hand grenades. Established gangs adhere to certain codes that promote solidarity and fraternity in the gang as, for instance, that no member of the gang would conceal the nature or quantity of loot from the gang leader, that he would carry the wounded and the dead, etc.³⁴

Intermittent gang members plan, assemble, make night forays, return and merge into the community. Regular gangs have a stable organisation with a leader, core members and others and may spend most of their life as dacoits in hideouts as proclaimed offenders.³⁵ For the supply of essentials, arms and ammunition, and information as well as for syphoning the loot, regular contacts are established. In order to create a 'Robin Hood image', dacoits at times generously distribute money among the needy. In the distribution of booty, the weapon-principle is usually followed: the more lethal a weapon a gang member possesses, the larger the share in the booty he gets.³⁶

MODES OF OPERATION

The *modus operandi* of dacoits differs not only from region to region but also in accordance with the type of gang and its motives. Systematic accounts about bank hold-up, train robbery and skijacking are almost non-existent, hence, modes of operation relating to land piracy are indicated here.

A brief reference to the weaponry and other accoutrement available with the dacoits has already been made. Established gangs also try to build up an image of invincibility. They kill real or suspected police informers and public witnesses. Some do not hesitate in attacking or even killing policemen.³⁷ Further, they assiduously build up an information network which covers their area of operation and occasionally have 'moles' in government departments, including the police. Keeping this backdrop in view, three main modes of operation of dacoit-gangs may be highlighted.

Raids for loot are usually preceded by target-identification. This may be brought about by

the gang's information network or persons of the locality seeking revenge on the targetted victim. In turn, the gang evaluates the information, potential resistance, and police disposition before deciding upon the target. It may also decide upon the time and season for raid. While closing upon the target, the gang usually sends one or two gang members as an advance party. Established gangs fire aerial shots to put down resistance and forestall intrusion from neighbours. Cash and jewellery are preferred. In securing keys of rooms, boxes, or safes or information about hidden valuables they are always prepared to coerce the victims. Oftentimes when the loot does not measure up to expectation, they kidnap one or more members of the family. The retreat of the predators may be heralded again by aerial shots.³⁸

While kidnapping for ransom is less expensive in terms of effort and ammunition, it makes heavy demands on the intelligence network of dacoits. They should have maximum information about the potential target, his movements and the opportune time. Moreover, it requires careful planning. Usually single persons are identified for the purpose; however, instances are not lacking when several persons at a time have been kidnapped. Once, a whole party of school children was kidnapped from a picnic spot. The victims are ambushed, seized and removed to a hideout. This is followed by a message, directly or through an intermediary, about kidnapping and the ransom demand. Information to the police usually imperils the life of the kidnapped. So is the case if no ransom or insufficient ransom is paid.³⁹

Chanda and *tika* as modes of operation are relatively simple. *Chanda* is a kind of levy imposed on households by the outlaws. Some days in advance, a gang member or sympathiser announces this forced donation, usually a small sum and then collects and passes the sum on to the gang, dissent meets with ruthless retribution. On the other hand, *tika* is the protection money offered 'volitionally' by businessmen, and public

works and forest contractors. They themselves or their representatives approach the gang and apply a *tika* (mark) on the forehead of the leader and offer a tray filled with currency notes⁴⁰

MEASURES TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM

In any systematic schemes directed at crime prevention, including that of dacoity, an integrated approach should be kept in mind. Primary, secondary and tertiary measures of crime prevention have often been emphasised. Social, economic and political measures designed to upgrade the quality of life are usually termed as primary measures, health and welfare services as secondary measures and formal and legal remedies as tertiary measures. Stated differently, legal measures alone would seldom be able to make a substantial dent into the problem of crime, including that of dacoity.

Since independence, through the five year plans, democratic decentralisation and changes in personal law, a conscious effort has been made to bring about substantial and positive social change.⁴¹ Social services have expanded considerably. Welfare schemes have been launched not only for the victims or their next-of-kin but also the family members of the dacoits imprisoned or executed.⁴²

A review of tertiary measures, including legislation, administration and police, appears necessary. Representing collective morality, legislative measures regulate and control individual and group behaviour. They also lay down and enforce preventive measures so that law-abiding citizens live in peace and harmony. The substantive law in the country takes cognizance of the gravity of the problem of dacoity. Is it able to combat the problem effectively? As already suggested, the distinction between robbery and dacoity does not appear to be realistic. Further, existing legal provisions do not adequately take care of informers and harbourers, the only exception in this regard is the Anti-Dacoity Ordinance

issued in 1981 in the State of Madhya Pradesh. Payments like *tika* and *chanda* also do not appear to be sufficiently covered. The offences of abduction (Sec 365) and kidnapping are defined in the I P C, but what is not defined is kidnapping for ransom, one of the common methods employed by dacoits. Based on the presumption of innocence, procedural law lays much emphasis on guilt being proved beyond doubt, in dacoity cases witnesses may be shaky or may even turn hostile. A reference may be made to the Arms Act which, in terms of punishment, does not distinguish between a blunderbuss and a brengun. In view of the increase in the incidence of dacoity and the emergent forms of dacoity, the legal framework perhaps calls for a review.⁴³

Among administrative measures, revenue administration and the working of civil courts needs attention. Revenue administration in many parts of the country leaves much to be desired, cases of property disputes drag on in civil courts for years together. More often than not, when people are not able to secure satisfactory redressal of their grievances, they feel inclined to take law into their hands, which may be the first step towards becoming a proclaimed offender or dacoit.

The police are the foremost among law enforcement agencies. They curb illegal behaviour, arrest crime-doers and bring them to book. In many dacoit-infested areas the police organisation has been strengthened. New police outposts and stations have been organised, transport and communication facilities have been expanded and weapons with greater power have been provided. Occasionally, the police of contiguous States have joined forces to undertake anti-dacoity operations. Indeed, the police has occasionally managed to suppress the problem. Has it been able to eradicate it? Unscrupulous officials in the police organisation are not wholly unknown.⁴⁴ Streamlining of the police organisation and its strengthening and modernisation will go a long way in helping to contain the problem substantially.

PEACE MISSIONS

Mythology abounds in references about ferocious outlaws who, at the instance of sages or saints, had a radical change in their attitude and behaviour and became law abiding citizens. A brief reference may be made to the general amnesty in 1947 granted to all proclaimed offenders and fugitives. The infamous Man Singh was one of those who availed of it, but only for a short while. The family feud prevailed and he committed more murders and became an outlaw once again.

Surrender by accused or proclaimed offenders before the police, civil authorities and courts is a regular feature. In 1920, H H Madhava Rao Scindia, the then ruler of Gwalior, had secured the surrender of a large number of dacoits along with substantial quantities of looted property. Thus, although surrender has been a part of the work of peace 'mission', it is a regular administrative-judicial feature throughout the country.

'Peace missions' in relation to dacoity have central India as the implicit referent. In 1960, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, the *Sarvodaya* leader, walked on foot through the Chambal Valley preaching and urging the dacoits to give up the life of terrorism and become good and constructive citizens. A few heeded to his counsel. Under the aegis of *Sarvodaya*, the Chambal Shanti Samiti was organised. After a few years, in 1972, another surrender of dacoits was organised. This time it was phenomenal; more than five hundred cutlaws surrendered, many of them armed with automatic weapons and carrying huge rewards on their heads. The process was repeated in 1978 when about a hundred outlaws surrendered in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.⁴⁵

Reference may be made to the persistence of the problem of dacoity in the Chambal Valley. Time and again, special measures have been initiated: the Frontier Special Force (1888), the Special Dacoity Police (1924), and the Joint Command (1953) had been formed. These police efforts have been able to suppress the problem only for a while. But is the approach

and work of peace missions a solution to the persistent problem?

The main plank in the work of peace missions and the surrender which they have helped to bring about is the theory of 'change of heart'. The implication is that, if approached with understanding and sympathy, the outlaws would give up their ruthless ways, take to repentance and turn into good citizens.⁴⁶

In 1960, the motive force behind the Vinoba Mission was the effort by Major-General (Retired) Yadunath Singh, a well meaning resident of rural Agra. He worked hard before the Acharya agreed to the *padyatra* for the outlaws to surrender. In 1972, as also in 1978, *Sarvodaya* workers and officials who showed understanding of the problem made the surrender possible. However, these surrenders were not as simple as those taking place before police and judicial officers. Invariably, they were preceded by negotiations and bargaining. While in 1960 it was mainly an understanding between the outlaws and the government, later it became more or less formal so that they would agree to surrender on certain conditions. These included: (1) the dacoits who surrender would not be awarded death penalty; (2) after surrender they would not be kept in the police lock-up and would be shifted directly to a jail for judicial custody; (3) they would not be interrogated; (4) they would be given expeditious trial at one place irrespective of the place of their offence, and (5) in the post-trial period they would receive in the jail a differential treatment.⁴⁷ The conditions were accepted. Did it conform to the legal framework? Questions have been asked as to who surrendered, dacoits or the government?

Further, at the time of surrender and laying down of arms, the dacoits insisted on the presence of one VIP or the other. These included, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Jai Prakash Narayan, a Chief Minister or a Minister. For understandable reasons, most of the outlaws who surrendered were acquitted, many got short terms of imprisonment, mostly under the

Arms Act; others spent a not too uncomfortable life in special jails with special facilities and were released in about five years⁴⁸

Doubtless, the work of the peace missions, including the surrender of a large number of dacoits which they brought about, is spectacular and phenomenal. Nevertheless, as a solution to the persistent problem in the Chambal Valley and elsewhere, it needs to be looked at dispassionately. First, the theory of change of heart is somewhat over-optimistic and emotion-loaded. Few of the top-listed outlaws came forward. In 1972, they had limited options as the administrative and police pressure was growing. So was the case in 1978. In any case, the theory of change of heart and laying down of preconditions for surrender are incongruent.

Secondly, the surrenders were not a happy example to other disruptive individuals and groups. Cynics argued that it was imprudent to commit one murder or one dacoity, rather, one should commit several of them to amass wealth and become notorious and then surrender and get away after spending some comfortable years in a special jail.

Lastly, attention may be turned to the incidence of dacoity in the areas concerned. Following the surrender *en masse* in 1972, the regions of Bundelkhand and the Chambal Valley did have a lull, but only for a few years. Not only is dacoity re-emerging, but also a large number of organised gangs have been formed, perhaps as ruthless and infamous as before. It may be reiterated that dacoity is rooted in several socio-cultural, economic and administrative conditions and hence no durable solution can be had till these conditions are substantially altered.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The offence of dacoity is at once old and new. What differentiates dacoity in contemporary times from that in ancient and medieval times is the *modus operandi*, with little or no difference in motives or

repercussions on the community. Several socio-cultural, economic, political and physical factors, which are otherwise neutral, combine to develop violent propensities, including dacoity. Contrary to popular notion, dacoits are not necessarily deprived, disadvantaged or persecuted people.

In modern times several conditions have directly or indirectly facilitated dacoity. Mass communication media, particularly films, have exposed many persons to new ways in aggression and violence. Rapid development activities combined with inflationary economic trends may have some thing to do with the level of aspiration and frustration of the people, and some of them may succumb to the urge of making easy money through dacoity. To this, modern weapons add yet another dimension. In spite of stringent regulations and licensing, lethal weapons, including modern automatic weapons, have reached the outlaws, distinctly raising the level of their coercive power.

It is, therefore, hardly surprising that the incidence of robbery and dacoity in the country is showing an upward trend. What is more, newer forms of dacoity like kidnapping for ransom, bus and train robbery, bank and petrol pump holdups and the like are increasing. There is a likelihood that the menace of air-piracy or skyjacking may also increase.

The foregoing account calls for a review of laws as also of the system of criminal justice. As stressed already, the difference between robbery and dacoity appears to be obsolete. Although recently amended, the Arms Act could do with a fresh look so as to render it more discerning. This apart, the law relating to sympathisers, informers and harbourers of dacoits needs to be made stringent. Likewise, ways and means need to be devised to facilitate and protect those members of the public who come forward to report a dacoity or to testify against an outlaw in the court.

Doubtless, police organisation and anti-dacoity operations, particularly in dacoit infested areas, need to be streamlined. In this,

there should be a logical balance between police strength and the equipment. In keeping with modern requirements and technology, means of transport and communication available with the police should be further strengthened. Several developed countries have organised rapid and highly mobile, radio-equipped police squads for beat patrolling and for highway patrolling.

Dacoity is not just another offence. It is both a property offence and an offence against person. For understandable reasons, occurrence of dacoity generates much terror or even panic in the locality and sometimes in the entire region. Society, the government and the criminal justice system, therefore, need to evolve effective strategies to curb and control it.

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NOTES

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DEVADASIS

The term '*devadasi*' means the servant of God. It is also interpreted as the slave-servant of God, handmaiden of God, sacred slave girl, temple girl, temple dancer, the harlot of the gods, and temple courtesan. The term is also used in an euphemistic sense to refer to women in the most ancient profession of the world, who claim to practice it under religious traditions and family custom. Hence, it was also known as religious prostitution. "A typical *devadasi* was a young, charming, beautiful damsel meticulously trained in the art of singing and dancing as well as public relations. As a dancer and singer she was superb exponent of the art. Hers was a life of excitement, of ecstasy and rare fulfilment through art"¹ At her best, she had a life of cultural ease and pleasure, and provided amusement and intellectual companionship to those who could afford. At her worst, she was a temple-drudge serving a passing stranger, but who still believed that she was performing an act of worship²

The system involved the dedication of young girls to a god, goddess or an object of worship through a public ceremony of marrying the girl to that deity followed by her maiden

performance in dancing or singing. In later years, the practice was to stamp the girl with the mark of a strident, *pinga* (phallus), *shankha*, *chakra*, or eagle, etc., by tattooing preferably on the right breast, with a view to distinguishing temple courtesans from palace courtesans, and these women from other classes of women.

The dedication in its pure and original form was of both men and women out of strong devotion to the deity. This original form of dedication emphasised the virginity of the women so long as she remained in the service of the god. Similarly, the men were required to dedicate their virility, hence castration preceded their dedication. This practice was mainly found in Greece and Egypt. But in later years the dedication of men by castration was replaced by the dedication of natural eunuchs. The dedication of women, however, was more common for, in the case of men, it was either voluntary dedication or transvestism. We find even today the dedication of men due to transvestism in Maharashtra and Karnataka. Such persons dedicate themselves to god Ekavir of Jejuri in Maharashtra and to goddess Renuka of Saundatti in north Karnataka.

ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE SYSTEM

The institution of *devadasis* has a history of more than 1700 years. It had a significant place in the social and religious life of the people throughout the ages. From available accounts it may be inferred that the institution was borrowed by the priests from the kings. Just as the kings employed armies of courtesans for enhancing their pomp and pleasure, the women were engaged for various services in the temple. There are references in the *Rig Veda* and other scripts of the later period about the *veshyas*, *ganikas* and courtesans under the patronage of both the king and the citizens. Particularly during the period of the great epic *Mahabharata*, it appears common on the part of kings to maintain a large number of courtesans as a symbol of status, pomp and pleasure. In Kautilya's *Arthashastra* there is

mention of the role and rights and duties of *ganikas*. The *ganika* was expected to hold the umbrella, the golden pitcher and the fan for the king when he was seated on the throne or in the chariot or palanquin, and sing and dance in the court.³

The post-Vedic period was the period of *Puranas* through which religion was made rather simple for the common man. It was during this period that temple religion and culture were developed in India. It was also during this period that the *varna* system had become quite rigid and the priest had come to occupy the top position in the socio-religious hierarchy or the caste system, because of which he could not relish and digest the pomp and pleasure of the Ksatriyas with regard to the armies of courtesans. Therefore, he started preaching the virtues of gifting or dedicating girls for the service of gods and temples. The average man by now had come to believe in the existence of heaven and hell and the happiness of going to heaven. Thus the *Padma Purana* in its *Srishtikanda* (chapter on Creation of Universe and Man) recommends the purchase of pretty girls by the people for gifting them to the temples. The *Bhavishya Purana* (futuristic mythology) laid down that the only way to ensure entry to *Suryalok* or heaven was to offer a band of beautiful girls to a sun temple.⁴ Chronologically, these *puranas* are ascribed to third century A.D. Therefore, it may be said that the system originated during the third century by the priest with the backing of religion, borrowing the idea from the king.

It may be noted here that Kautilya in his *Arthashastra* has not used the term in the sense it is ordinarily used. There is also no reference to the dedication of girls to the temples. The type of *devadasis* mentioned in the *Arthashastra* were not enslaved to the temples or objects of worship. They had the freedom to retire from the temple service and earn a livelihood by spinning in the state departments. As such a *devadasi* of this period was not a temple dancer or courtesan; she was more like a Catholic nun.⁵

To state it differently, the institution of

devadasis in its original form was free from sex and promiscuity, it was noble in character. The temple girls were enjoined upon the duties of sweeping and cleaning the temple floors, cleaning and oiling the sacred lamps, fanning the idol and singing and dancing while the idol was worshipped twice a day, carrying the sacred lamp and/or fanning the idol during the festivals and processions, etc. For these various services, she received remuneration from the temple in the form of a regular income, either annual payment in cash or a piece of land as gift, and also *ex gratia* payments occasionally. A *devadasi* could retire from the temple service only after crossing her adulthood. These duties, the service conditions and remuneration compare fairly well with those of the palace courtesans.

With changing times, religion and the practices associated with it underwent a change enabling the Brahmin priest to develop certain vested interests in various institutions emanating from or associated with religion, gods and temples. In Hindu religion and mythology a large number of gods and demi-gods, supernatural powers and evil spirits with different roles were created with a view to having a control over the life of the common man. He was told that he should seek the blessings of the gods and keep the evil spirits in good humour to avert possible miseries and sufferings and/or to counteract the evil influences of various spirits. Among many possible ways of earning the blessings of the gods and demi-gods and the pleasure of the spirits, one method advised was to dedicate beautiful girls to the gods or other objects of worship. The common man was also told through religious scripts that if he did not have a male child he would not go to heaven; so to get a male child the people were advised to dedicate the female child, already born, to the temple. The priests were also able to create a socio-religious obligation on the part of the low caste people to regularly dedicate young girls from their communities to the gods so that the Brahmins and other caste Hindus could have sexual relations with them instead of

marrying more than one girl. These attempts of the priestly class were combined with monetary rewards for the family of the girl dedicated as a *devadasi* besides the promise of happiness both in this world and the next. As a result, poor parents and people afflicted by famines and floods were persuaded to part with their daughters often for a paltry sum of money, ignoring the personal life of the young girls. The girls thus purchased were brought up by the temple priests and were trained to become temple dancers.

By the 7th century A.D., temple building activity was very extensive in the South because of royal interest; hence, the institution had its firm roots in Indian culture. The sun temple became famous for eroticism; one could find in these temples scores of *devadasis*. And in later periods, temples of all kinds had their full complement of singing and dancing girls. Thus by the end of the 10th century the total number of *devadasis* in any temple was in direct proportion to the wealth and prestige of the temple. For example, the famous shrine of Somanath in Saurashtra, when it was plundered by Muhammad Gazni, had 350 women in its service to provide music day and night for the pleasure of the presiding deity.⁶

The invasion of India by the Muslims marked the beginning of the decline of the institution in the north, it came to an end with the destruction of temples like Somanath by the iconoclasts, the mass conversions from Hinduism to Islam and the raising of mosques in places of temples. But in South India, which was ruled by Hindu kings, the system flourished with the same vigour till the institution of prostitution was completely commercialised during the 20th century and shed its social and cultural features with increasing industrialization and urbanization. Thus, as has been observed by Abdur Razak, the Vijayanagar empire at the zenith of its glory had conferred considerable social recognition on *devadasis*.⁷ During the medieval period they were regarded as a part of the normal establishment of temples, they occupied a rank next only to the priests and

their number often reached high proportions. For example, there were 400 *devadasis* attached to the temple at Tanjore during the 10th and 11th centuries, so also in Travancore. However, the institution soon degenerated into religious prostitution mainly because of the exploitation by the temple authorities and other vested interests, their increasing number and inadequate income from the temple services.

REGIONAL FORMS

The term *devadasi* is of Sanskrit origin. Though it was commonly used, the institution and the women in the profession were known locally under different terms. In Tamil Nadu they were known as *devaradiar* or *dasis*, meaning slave servants of god or servants, respectively, as *kudikkars*, those belonging to the house in the Travancore region, as *dogams* and *sanis* in Andhra Pradesh, as *basavis* and *jogatis* in the Kannada speaking areas, as *bhavins* or *bhavinis*, meaning beautiful wanton women, in Goa and Western India, as *muralis jogatis* or *jogtinis* and *aradhinis* in Maharashtra (other than coastal region), and as *bhagtanis* or *bhagtan*, wife of a *bhagat* or holy man in Marwar.

The institution of *devaradiar* was the most prominent one among similar institutions in peninsular India. In this region temple building activity and elaborate services in the temples were very extensive since the Chola period. Wherever temples were built, the *dasis* were attached to them. In fact, in the South, only Tamil Nadu has a large number of temples. A large number of *devaradiars* were attached to the temples at Conjeevaram, Madurai, Sri Rangam, Tanjore and other places. Throughout history, the total number of temple girls was in direct proportion to the wealth and prestige of the shrine, and the institution flourished with vigour under the patronage of both the temple and the state. The inscriptions left by the Chola kings indicate that in 1004 A.D. the great temple at Tanjore built by King Raja Raja Chola was attached with 400 *dasis*, who were transferred

from other temples, these women were named after the sacred places. They were housed in free quarters built by the state in four streets around the temple, were granted free land out of temple endowments, and an officer was appointed to supervise and direct their dancing and singing. Though these women were granted free lands, in course of time they had to subsist by dancing and singing and taking to prostitution. The *devaradiars* in Tamil Nadu formed a regular caste with their own laws of inheritance, customs, rules of etiquette, system of recruitment, and caste *panchayats* to see that all the rules were followed and girls were recruited to the institution regularly. It had no parallel in any other part of India. After a rigorous training in music or dancing, the girls were married formally in a temple to a sword or a god, but the sacred necklace was tied to her by some one from her caste. The sons and daughters of these women inherited equally the property of their mother contrary to the ordinary Hindu practice. The girls who were too simple to be a success in the profession drifted out of the community; they married and had a settled family life. The male children remained in the caste and lived as accompanists to the temple dancers or by teaching singing and dancing to the younger girls and music to the boys. They were called *melakkarans* and *nattuvans*, respectively. Some of them used to affix to their names terms like *pillai* and *mudali*, which were the usual titles of the two castes, *vellal* and *kaikola*, from which most of the *dasīs* were recruited. The *kaikola* musicians of Coimbatore were required to dedicate at least one of their daughters every year. In fact, there is a village named after this caste, viz., Kaikolapalayam, near Coimbatore. There were also cases in which sons of wealthy and respected dancing women were allowed to marry girls of respectable parentage of other castes. These castes and their allies—the *melakkarans*—were till recently the sole repository of Indian music and dance.⁹

The temple girls in north Travancore were originally from South Konkan and Madurai

regions, but others were of indigenous class. The female members of the caste, besides being known by the ordinary names of *tevadial* and *dasī*, both meaning servant of god, were called as *kudikkars*, *dendukal* or women. Those *kudikkars* who had gained expertise in dancing and singing were conferred the title of '*Rayar*' (king). This appears to have been last conferred in 1847 A.D. The south Travancore *dasīs* had no social intercourse with the *dasīs* of the Tamil speaking districts. They adopted girls only from a division of the Nayars, Tamil Padam, and danced only in temples; they did not accept private engagements in houses on marriage occasions. A dancing girl on becoming old was allowed to retire from the temple service by removing her ear-pendants in the palace in the presence of the authorities by paying a *nuzur* (gift). After thus laying down her profession, she was supposed to lead a life of retirement and resignation. She continued to receive her wages from the temple, but at a reduced rate. There were two types of *dasīs*—the *murakkudi* and *chitrappukudi*. While the former attended to the daily routine the latter served on special occasions. The South Travancore *dasīs* were enjoined upon the duties of attending two festivals at Sri Padmanabhaswami temple and the Dussera at the capital, meeting and escorting members of the royal family at their respective village limits, and undertaking the prescribed fasts for the *apamargam* ceremony in connection with the annual festival of the temple, on these days strict continence was enjoined, and they were fed at the temple one meal a day.¹⁰

The *bhavins* of Goa and Konkan region of Maharashtra were also known as *devlī* (an attendant of an idol), or as *naikin* (mistress, procuress). The system was hereditary. Interestingly these women came from the households of the chiefs of the communities in which the system was in existence. A *bhavini* was free to choose two or three of her daughters to succeed her. These women differed from the common prostitutes only with regard to dedication to a temple.¹¹

Bhagtan or *bhagtani* was only an ironical title denoting that the woman is the wife of a holy man—that holy man being the god. Under this system, the girl was required to marry a *sadhu* or the portrait of Lord Ganesha before entering the temple service, for it was considered a sin to allow the maidens to take up the profession before marriage. A *sadhu* was supposed to give up every connection with his bride on a nominal payment of rupee one and a half as a token for his sacrifice. When no *sadhu* was available the girl was married to the portrait of Lord Ganesha—the god of enterprise.¹²

While the institution of *basavis* was prevalent almost all over the Kannada speaking areas during the British period, the institution of *jogatis* has been confined to north-western Karnataka and the adjoining southern Maharashtra. There were three sub-systems among the *basavis* in three regions—Bellary region, Bombay-Karnataka region and Mysore region. It was usual among the Lingayats or the Veerasaivas to dedicate bulls to the temples, which served as the breeding bulls of the village. Similarly, the cows were dedicated. While a bull was known as *basava*—the celestial vehicle of God Siva—a cow was known as *basavi*. These cows belonged to the temple and their progenies were ample. In the Bellary region among the Boyas and Bedaru castes when a family was without a male child it used to dedicate the youngest daughter as a *basavi* so that she could help her father's family to continue its lineage. On being dedicated as a *basavi* she was free to have intercourse with any person within her own caste or from higher castes to get children. No stigma was attached to the *basavis* and their offsprings born out of the promiscuous sex life. All the male children of a *basavi* were taken as the legitimate heirs of her father while the daughters were to become the *basavis*. The sons could marry within her father's caste and have all other social privileges. Even the courts accepted this system during the late 19th and early 20th centuries as the normal social system different from promiscuity.¹³

In the Bombay-Karnataka area there were two types of *basavis*, viz. *Bala Basavi* and *Batla Basavi*. The former was recruited from the Mahar caste—the untouchables among the Veerasaivas. The term *bala* means young or maiden. So they were supposed to remain virgin all their life. These women were reputed prognosticators of events such as rain, weather, crops, etc.—subjects of interest to the villagers. They always carried with them an indigenous guitar called *tamburi*, and used to worship it on the new year day—*Yugadi*. One may find even today these *basavis* (but aged) in a few villages. On the other hand, the *Batla Basavis* carried with them a concave vessel, (*batla* means concave vessel). They were many more in number compared to *Bala Basavis* and engaged themselves in prostitution, but as a duty. The Veerasaiva philosophy has been "Work is Worship". Sincere and devout pursuit of one's own profession is considered as the right path to salvation. The profession of a *Batla Basavi* was prostitution within the community according to Rule 11 of the 64 Rules of Conduct for the Veerasaivas. The vessel was given to her by the merchant community among the Veerasaivas, she was free to collect a vesselful of grams from everybody's shop or the house for her living. Her brothers had no claim to her perquisites granted by the community, except one-fourth of the movable property of her family. She was to observe certain rules of conduct, mainly no sexual union with a non-Veerasaiva or a *Bhavi*. If she was found to have such relations, her privileges were withdrawn by the community and thereby she was forced to become a common prostitute. It also meant loss of heaven to her. In other words, the institution of *Basavis* was socially, economically and spiritually recognised.¹⁴

In the erstwhile princely state of Mysore, the *Basavis* were classified into *Linga Basavi* and *Garuda Basavi* indicating that they belonged to Saivas and Vaishnavas respectively. They were stamped with the symbols of phallus and eagle or *shankha* and *chakra* on their right breast as the distinctive rank and status. They were to

serve the respective communities, which in course of time became less adhered to.¹⁵

Finally, the *jogatis* are dedicated to a goddess in the Bombay-Karnataka region known as Renuka or Yallamma (mother of all) whose shrine is situated near Saundatti in Belgaum district. The practice is prevalent even today. But not all the *jogatis* take to prostitution. There are different types among the *jogatis* distinguished on the basis of the necklace of beads they wear. These are the *Garati muttu*, *Jogati muttu* and *Sule muttu*. The term *Garati* means a devout wife; *jogati* means a woman who has renounced worldly pleasures, being a corrupt form of the Sanskrit word *Yogini*; the term *Sule* means prostitute, and *Muttu* means pearl/bead. The women from lower castes and poor families dedicate themselves as the devotees of Renuka in order to keep the vows taken in crisis situations and to seek the blessings, or to ensure a steady source of livelihood to the family because the *jogatis* are required to compulsorily collect alms on every Tuesday and Friday at least from five houses. The second type of *jogatis* are not entirely different from the first type. Under this sub-type, a woman other than the married may dedicate herself as a *jogati*. Among them one would certainly find a large number of retired prostitutes, because of which the institution is looked down upon. The third type of *jogatis* take to prostitution soon after dedication. The dedication ceremony does not take place in the temple. And none of these three types of *jogatis* serve in the temple of Renuka. It may be noted that it is the third type of *jogatis* who, these days, claim to be the *devadasis* and take to prostitution as a family custom and tradition.

PUBLIC OPINION AND SOCIAL RECOGNITION

The practice of dedicating girls as temple courtesans and dancers was of respectable antiquity. The institution, specially during the medieval period, enjoyed considerable social recognition. Often the *devadasis* were compared by Sanskrit scholars and poets to goddess Lakshmi attending to her Lord Murari

on earth¹⁶ and also to *apsaras* (heavenly nymphs). This is indicative of the extent to which the practice corroded the whole society.

Though the system owes its origin to the ingenuity of the priest, in course of time he could not keep a monopolistic control over the institution. He had to seek the collaboration of influential individuals of Hindu society. Such individuals and the priest constituted the temple authority. The overall administration of the temple, the recruitment of temple dancers, their discipline and rewarding system, etc., came to be vested in this committee. The members of this committee controlled the life of *devadasis* to a great extent. They interpreted the dedication as marriage to the god and temple. It was made known to the *devadasi* that her life belonged to the temple. She was required to serve god and his votaries, to provide pleasure and a sense of godliness to the devotees who came to worship. As a matter of fact, a young, attractive dancer was a great asset to a temple. She drew crowds during the festivals and created a new interest in the temple at other times.

To be dedicated to a temple, the person had to be a virgin. *Devadasis* attached great importance to this; so also the men in search of mistresses, besides the priests and trustees who exploited her personal life for satisfying their sexual instincts outside the matrimonial bounds.¹⁷ As Abbe J.A. Dubois, the French traveller pointed out, it was a common practice on the part of the priests to demand women and girls from their men and parents for the seraglio of God Venkateswara of Tirupathi and Jagannatha of Puri, and retire them after losing taste for their charms while recommending for the general public, who were received by the public as the *Kalyuga Lakshmis*—modern incarnation of the wife of Vishnu—and their demands were met wherever they went.¹⁸

The temple dancer was also a professional dancer. But there was no way in which a professional dancer could make a living through her art. There were no public

performances where people paid to watch dancing and singing. The few occasions when she used to be invited to give performance were not enough to enable her to make a decent living. Therefore, the only way in which she could thrive and make a fortune before becoming old was to have a powerful patron(s) to whom she could grant her intimate charms and favour.¹⁹ Thus the institution of concubinage emerged. When she could not find a wealthy patron she offered her body to any man who afforded her maintenance temporarily thereby leading the life of a whore unmindful of eventually past youth being thrown on the scrapheap of humanity. It may be mentioned that remaining loyal to a person all through was unusual for a *devadasi*, yet quite a few of them proved to be loyal. Though a *devadasi* led an immoral life, she enjoyed an enviable social position in certain respects. During village festivals she had an important role to play, in marriages she prepared the sacred thread for the bride since she married the god, an encounter with her while embarking on a journey was regarded as a good omen. Above all, they were the only class of women to learn letters, singing and dancing till mid-19th century.²⁰

The practice of dedicating girls soon became very common among the backward classes and lower castes, mainly, because it offered economic security to the family against poverty and destitution. In Tamil Nadu, inscriptions have revealed the sales of daughters and grand-daughters to the temples as *dasis* by indigent parents. Among the Madigas of Karnataka—and the untouchable community among the Veerasaivas—and the Karkola musicians of Coimbatore it was the custom of the family to have always one daughter as the *devadasi*, a group of families or a clan saw to it that at least one girl was dedicated every year.

According to Alberuni, the *devadasis* were maintained by the kings much to the opposition of the priests as a regular source of revenue to meet the expenses of their armies. In certain other cases, it was found that these women handed over their earnings to the

temple authorities to defray the temple expenses.²¹ And as Sir Monier Williams wrote, while the *devadasis* amassed huge fortunes on the one hand, on the other they spent lavishly on works of piety and public benefactions, indicating thereby the social standing of the courtesans.²²

Dance/singing recitals by these women in the temples were the only means of mass entertainment available to the people, who often eagerly waited for these performances. Good dancers and singers were highly respected even in those days.

Above all, under the Hindu laws, as administered by the British courts, *devadasis* were the only class of women allowed to adopt a daughter. As it is observed by Mayne, no ceremonies were involved in adopting a girl, only social recognition was sufficient. In Madras and western India it was customary for the adopted girls to follow the profession of the *devadasi* who adopted them.²³

MEASURES OF REFORM

Since the institution of *devadasis* was borrowed by the priest from the king and served as a source of regular income to the temple, the state and the families of the girls and satisfied the personal desires of many, no attempts were made to abolish the system nor even to impose restrictions. It was only after the country came under the direct control of the British Crown in the 19th century that the age of the girl to be dedicated as a *devadasi* was prescribed. But it was flouted by the parents and wards either by quoting wrong age or seeking permission on religious grounds. There is enough evidence to this effect in the Bellary region of the erstwhile Madras Presidency. It, however, became difficult for the retiring *devadasis* to purchase girls from poor families, train them and press them into the temple service. The Madras High Court from 1860s had dealt with a large number of cases involving dedication of girls. It simply dismissed the petitions claiming the right to be *devadasis*. For example, in 1896 a 17 year old

girl sued the trustees of a Pagoda for not allowing her to become a *dasi* in succession to her adopted mother. She prayed the High Court that the trustees be compelled to allow her to become a *dasi* and render the services in the temple and get entitled to the honours and endowments attached to the position of *dasi*. The petition was dismissed on the ground that the claim in effect was a claim to be enlisted as a public prostitute²⁴

The 19th century is considered as the century of social reforms. Various attempts were made by persons like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwara Chandra Vidyasagar, Mahadeo Govind Ranade, Karve, etc., to bring changes in the position of women. Whether it was the *sati* system, widow remarriage, bigamy under the *kulin* system of Bengal, or women's emancipation, the concern, unfortunately, was for the woman in the family. The woman attached to the temples and engaged in prostitution did not attract the attention of these reformers. In Madras province, however, under the auspices of the Madras Hindu Social Reform Association established in 1892, Shri R. Venkata Rathnam Naidu (1862-1939) ventured to fight this social evil. He started the Social Purity Movement advocating temperance and combating the *devadasi* custom²⁵. Though in Bombay and other provinces similar associations were formed, there is no evidence to show that they started any movements against the system. In other words, the impact of the social reform movement was rather marginal on this institution.

The British Government took steps for the enactment of a law abolishing the system only after the World National Seminar was held during 1906-07, which had resolved to abolish prostitution in whatever form it existed. In 1912 three members of the Bar Association—Manickji Dadabhai, Mudholkar and Medki—presented three separate Bills on the subject in the Viceroy's Assembly. After mobilising public opinion in favour of the Bill the Government prepared a new Bill in September 1913 and referred it to the Select

Committee, which submitted its report in March 1914. But once again the Bill was subjected to public opinion, perhaps only with a view to delaying the enactment. And due to World War I, the Bill did not see the light of the day for nearly a decade. In 1922 Dr. Goray introduced another Bill in the Viceroy's Assembly. After a lot of debate it was agreed to refer the Bill for public opinion, yet the enactment was not immediate²⁶.

In 1924, the Indian Penal Code was amended and Sections 372 and 373 declared the practice of dedicating girls to temples and objects of worship for the ultimate purpose of engaging them in prostitution as immoral, and that whoever disposes off any person under the age of 18 years (or obtain possession of any person) with intent that such person shall at any age be employed or used for the purpose of prostitution or illicit intercourse with any person or with the knowledge that the person is likely to be employed or used for any such purpose at any age is liable to be prosecuted. Since the orthodox opinion was in favour of dedicating the girls below 12 and the amendment to the I.P.C. prevented such dedication, the parents and guardians of minor girls flouted it extensively. In quite a few cases, the minor girls were simply put to training in dance and music till they completed their 18th year and then were dedicated as *devadasis*.

The Bombay Devadasi Protection Act, 1934, declared the performance of ceremonies for dedicating an unmarried woman to an idol or temple illegal and rendered the dedicator or abettor thereof liable to punishment—one year's imprisonment or fine or both. In 1947, the Madras province enacted the Devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act. It was rather forced to do so and was guided by strong public opinion and social movements. During the first half of the 20th century there was great impact of socio-political thinkers like Shri E. V. Ramaswamy, popularly known as Periar (meaning great man), on the socio-religious institutions. The Self-Respect Movement started by Periar took up the issue of *devadasis*. Wide

public opinion was created against the system, even the District Boards and Municipalities extended their support. From 1929 onwards the Self-Respect Movement in its annual conferences strongly condemned the institution and demanded to 'free them and marry them'. There was also extensive lobbying in the Legislative Assembly.

But it is a fact that these legislations, though enforced sincerely, did not succeed in totally preventing the dedication of girls. It was only after independence and after significant social changes taking place among the low caste and backward communities that the dedication of girls has stopped. There have been instances of organised protest by youths of the scheduled castes (in Bombay-Karnataka) to prevent such dedication. Today one may be able to come across the *devadasis* in their 50s, 60s or 70s living a retired life. Some of them have taken to teaching, dancing and singing, while others are engaged in commercial prostitution as the brothel keepers. They are only the last vestiges of an institution that was an integral part of the social and cultural life of the society in ancient and medieval times.

B R PATIL

NOTES

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DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The provision of social services as part of social action to enhance the quality of life and increase the productive capacity of the working population has been recognised as an essential component of the overall plan of development by social scientists and development planners in all developing countries.

In India, it is estimated that about 20 to 25 percent of the urban population is living in slums and about 40 percent of the total population is below the poverty line. Good education, health, safe drinking water and minimum welfare services are beyond the reach of the majority of the population even today. Taking the experience of planning in India, rethinking about the concept of development appears to be necessary. The argument that in the initial stages of growth underdeveloped countries cannot afford large outlays on social services and must concentrate on economic programmes only leaving social development to follow in the wake of economic progress, is no longer looked upon with favour. The example of Puerto Rico, which has made very substantial investment in social services, thus contributing to economic development rather than constituting a drain on the budget, is worth mentioning in this context. Increased facilities of health, education, housing, and welfare would help poor families pull out of their traditional constraints and work more positively for development.

Improvement in quality of life is the ultimate goal of development planning which includes not only efforts for accelerating economic growth but also those bearing on the distribution of the benefits of economic prosperity. These two aspects are mutually reinforcing and complementary. As economic phenomena are socially conditioned, any development planning when limited only to economic relationships without taking the social situation into consideration, is not likely to produce optimum benefits. Efficiency and productivity to some extent result from improvements in physical and social conditions of the working population, its attitudes, aspirations and motivations. Development in social sectors like health, education, water supply and social welfare will facilitate redistribution of basic consumption goods required for the maintenance of minimum quality in the levels of living, particularly among weaker sections. Available evidence shows that the utilisation of the existing

infrastructure is very poor due to low levels of education, ignorance and lack of awareness. Moreover, weaker sections of society are not in a position socially and economically to compete in the market for these services. Therefore, special efforts are required to reorient the distribution of these services with a view to facilitating their flow to those in need. In the long run, social development policies will enable the weaker sections to get integrated in the overall developmental processes. Without these benefits, they would remain spectators in the process of development rather than partners. It is thus necessary to view the developmental process not only as comprising economic elements but also social aspects. The provision of health, housing, water supply, education and other social inputs are essential pre-requisites for economic growth. The well-being of the population would depend very much upon the effective distribution of such social services and their efficient utilisation. Past experience reveals that in spite of increases in gross national product and per capita income, it has not been reflected in the uplift of the levels of living of the poorer sections. The benefits of economic development are not likely to reach the weakest unless certain social factors like large family size, illiteracy, high incidence of mortality, morbidity, particularly among children, and high dependency ratio which impede progress are also considered.

Studies have shown that educated families are able to utilise the infrastructure developed by planned growth much better than families with low literacy. The utilisation of the health and educational infrastructure in the country is an example. The most recent example is that of Kerala which has been successful in bringing down infant mortality to around 60 (1975-78) in comparison with 128 per thousand prevailing in the country. Female literacy in Kerala is the highest in the country and utilisation of health infrastructure is far better than in Punjab and Haryana which have higher per capita income than Kerala. Similarly, morbidity patterns and lower nutritional status of the labour force are very much responsible

for absenteeism and low productivity in the industrial sector. Improvement of environmental sanitation, provision of safe drinking water, enhancement of nutritional status and control of family size would have helped to improve the productivity of different socio-economic groups to a large extent

Recent studies on family planning have revealed that couples where husband and wife are educated have adopted family limitation more successfully than those where only husbands are educated. In other words, low female literacy had impeded the adoption of the small family norm. Improvement of nutritional status is linked as much with knowledge about nutritional deficiencies and general educational levels as with per capita income. There are about 10 to 14 disabilities which are affecting different segments of the population in a big way. Many of these disabilities could have easily been prevented with relatively modest investments and would have thereby saved the exchequer enormous sums of money spent on costly curative and rehabilitative services for various types of handicapped persons. Investment in social services would, therefore, have to be made an integral part of the overall frame of economic development rather than being taken as a matter of making small financial allocations for purely welfare reasons. This is necessary to promote better utilisation of the existing infrastructure and to enhance the productive capacity of the population.

Outlays in social services have ranged from 22.4 per cent in the First Plan to 14.0 per cent in the Sixth Plan. The highest proportion of investment was made in the First Plan. However, the emphasis in the earlier Plans had been on the expansion of the infrastructure rather than on qualitative improvement. Inadequate attention has so far been paid to evolving alternative models of delivery systems in order to reach the intended target groups appropriate to different ecological regions and socio-economic groups.

While formulating a plan of action for providing social services, it has to be

recognised that India is a vast country with considerable variation in resource and social endowments. In view of the magnitude of the problem and the resource constraints certain priorities will have to be fixed for extending social services. In terms of regions, the backward and remote areas and the hill areas should receive greater attention. In urban centres, people residing in slums should get greater attention. In terms of social groups, the Constitution contains certain special provisions. Article 46, in the Directive Principles of State Policy, indicates that the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. There are a number of provisions relating to protection of children and also women. Article 24 states that no child below the age of 14 years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment. Also, the State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years (Article 45). Equality of opportunity for work in all spheres of activity has been guaranteed and there should be equal pay for equal work both for men and women. As is clear from the relevant provisions, the framers of the Constitution had in view children, women, the handicapped, the aged and certain categories of weaker sections.

After the Constitution came into force, the list of scheduled castes were notified by the President in accordance with the provisions of Article 351 of the Constitution. The specification of the list of scheduled tribes was done on the basis of tribal origin, primitive way of life and habitation in remote and less easily accessible areas. Besides scheduled castes and scheduled tribes many State Governments have declared certain castes as backward classes. Uniform criteria for the identification of these groups have not been adopted. For instance, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu took note of

the economic position and also of caste as basis for their selection, whereas Assam, Bihar and Kerala selected them on the basis of caste only. Besides the above categories, a review of the programmes in different sectors would reveal that certain groups have been identified as weaker sections deserving special attention. These are the families who have uneconomic land holdings, landless agricultural labourers, village artisans, workers, nomadic tribes, destitutes, widows, orphans, old people and the unemployed. Backwardness has also been operationally defined recently and certain areas have been identified on the assumption that the people living in them are very poor and their problems cannot be tackled unless the basic infrastructure in these areas is properly developed. The development of infrastructure will facilitate the socio-economic uplift of the weaker sections inhabiting these areas. These are identified on the basis of certain inherent constraints on development, e.g., areas prone to drought, hill areas and tribal areas.

The approach to tackling the problems of underdeveloped regions and also the provision of support to the various weaker socio-economic groups has varied from Plan to Plan during the last 25 years. The first three Plans aimed at achieving a socialist pattern of society by structuring socio-economic relations in such a manner as to assure greater equality and justice. The Fourth Plan re-emphasised the objective of reducing inequalities and social injustice. In the Fifth Plan, removal of poverty constituted the main objective. The basic elements in the strategy for achieving these goals were the implementation of a national programme of minimum needs, extended social services, emphasis on industries producing goods for mass consumption, adequate public procurement and distribution for assured supply of essential consumption goods to the poorer sections at a reasonably stable price, restraint on non-essential consumption and inequitable prices, and proper institutional, fiscal and other measures for reduction of socio-economic and regional inequalities.

In the earlier Plans within the feasible financial limits, provisions were made for providing (1) facilities for elementary education for children upto the age of 14 years, (2) uniform availability of minimum public health facilities including preventive medicine, and nutrition, (3) supply of safe drinking water to villages having chronic scarcity or unsafe source of water, (4) environmental improvement of slums and spread of electrification to rural areas. In the field of education, wider educational opportunities, linking of the pattern of education with the needs of development and employment markets, improvement of quality of education, and involvement of the community, including students, in the task of social and economic development were envisaged. In the health sector, the Plans indicated greater priority for increasing accessibility to health services in rural areas and correcting regional imbalances, and intensive control and eradication of communicable diseases. Similarly, to tackle the problem of housing the Plans provided for house sites to landless labourers, subsidised houses to the weaker sections of the community and support to institutional agencies for undertaking schemes for the benefit of low income and middle income groups. In the social welfare sector emphasis has been placed on the preventive and developmental approach in place of the curative and rehabilitative approach of the past. In the backward classes sector, major efforts are being made by the States and the Centre for the removal of educational backwardness among the weaker sections. In the State sector, programmes for providing incentives to students such as stipends, book grants, uniforms and mid-day meals are being provided for children of backward classes. In the Central sector, post-matric scholarships are being given to a large number. Special coaching and allied schemes are also being implemented to help the students from these communities.

MINIMUM NEEDS PROGRAMME

The Sixth Plan (1980-85) focuses attention

on the removal of unemployment and increase in the standards of life of the poorer sections of the community. Towards the realisation of this objective, the minimum needs programme has been given considerable importance so as to reduce regional imbalances and disparities in the basic infrastructure in rural areas. This programme includes supply of drinking water, provision of housing assistance for landless rural labour households, village access roads, facilities for elementary education, provision of rural health services, expansion of rural electrification, environmental improvement of urban slums, adult education, and supplementary nutrition programmes for pre-school and school-going children and pregnant and nursing mothers. The programme aims at providing (a) elementary education to hundred per cent of children in the age group 6-14 by 1990, and (b) covering all adults in the age group 15-35 under the adult literacy programme by 1990. The rural health programme will aim at providing community health workers to fully cover and provide services for sanitation, immunisation, simple remedies and referral services. Besides, one primary health centre for every 50,000 population and a sub-centre for 5,000 population will be established. All those problem villages which do not have an assured supply of safe drinking water will be provided with this facility excepting in some difficult areas. Also, the linking of the villages with a population of 1,000 or more with roads will be taken up on a large scale. Moreover, electricity to at least 50 per cent of the villages in each State and Union Territory would be made available.

The programme of house sites and financial assistance for housing to landless rural labour households would be extended with greater vigour. For the urban slum dwellers improvement of environment in terms of (a) expansion of water supply, (b) sewerage, (c) paving of streets, and (d) provision of community latrines would be undertaken. Special attention will be paid to the extension of these services to areas predominantly

inhabited by scheduled castes, scavengers and other weaker sections. The nutrition programme for the under-nourished includes provision of mid-day meals for one-fourth of the children in the age group 6-11 years and supplementary feeding programme for under-nourished children in the age 0-6, pregnant women and nursing mothers, particularly in blocks with high concentration of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

The position in respect of elementary education varies considerably among the States. The States lagging behind in raising levels of enrolment and retention in elementary education would have to strengthen non-formal classes and also make the functioning of the existing infrastructure more effective. Special efforts will also have to be made to reach the backward and remote areas, especially those belonging to the socially and economically disadvantaged groups, children belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and girls. Besides, non-formal education for adults in the age group 15-35 years would have to be given adequate attention as part of the elementary education programme.

The rural health infrastructure would have to be augmented to achieve the national objective of health for all by 2000 A.D. For this purpose the following norms have been laid:

(i) One community health volunteer for every village or a population of a 1,000 would form the basic unit at the village level. Such a volunteer will be selected by the community itself.

(ii) One sub-centre for a population of 5,000 in the plains and of 3,000 in hilly and tribal areas would be set up.

(iii) One Primary Health Centre for 30,000 population in the plains and 20,000 in the hilly and tribal areas would be established.

(iv) One Community Health Centre for a population of 1 lakh or one Community Development Block would be set up.

The number of community health volunteers would be increased to 36 lakhs by the end of 1985. Besides, 4,000 sub-centres would be added to the existing 50,000 by the end of the Sixth Plan.

It has been estimated that there are about 2 lakh problem villages requiring the provision of safe drinking water. Villages which do not have assured supply of drinking water within a reasonable distance, say 1.6 kms; places where existing sources of water supply are endemic to water-borne diseases like cholera, guinea-worm etc.; and places where available water suffers from excess of salinity, iron or fluoride or other toxic elements hazardous to health, will be taken up for urgent action.

Under the programme of rural electrification, the plan proposes to cover at least 60 per cent of the villages in each State by 1990. Of the total number of 1,15,000 villages to be electrified, about 46,464 villages will be electrified during 1980-85. The rural electrification programme will place emphasis on the provision of street lights on internal roads of villages and in *Haryana* bastis.

It has been estimated that about 1.45 crore landless labour households would require housing assistance. Of this number, about 77 lakh families have already been allotted house-sites. Sites would have to be allotted during the plan period for the remaining 68 lakhs.

The special nutrition programme (SNP) was introduced on the non-plan side during 1970-71 and subsequently it was brought into the Fifth Plan as a part of the minimum needs programme. It provides 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein for the age group 0-6 for 300 days and 500 calories and 25 grams of protein for pregnant and nursing mothers for 300 days. The programme is likely to achieve a cumulative coverage of 81.8 lakhs. It would be expanded to fully cover 1,000 Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Projects. The scheme outside the ICDS projects will be restructured by providing health and other welfare inputs. Adequate staff for supervision and monitoring would have to be provided to make the scheme more effective.

The Mid-day Meals Programme (MDM) for the age group 6-11 was introduced in 1962-63. It provides for mid-day meals to children for 200 days in a year. It supplements 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein per child per day. It was made a part of the minimum needs programme in the Fifth Plan and will continue as part of the MNP in the Sixth Plan. About 17.4 lakh children are being covered. Recent studies have shown that the scheme has not made much impact either in increasing enrolment or in reducing the drop-out ratio. It would, therefore, be necessary to reorganise and link it with other services like health, safe drinking water, environmental sanitation and personal hygiene.

EDUCATION

Before expanding additional infrastructure for primary, secondary and technical education, the existing programme would have to be consolidated in order to achieve optimum results. However, expansion of the educational facilities may have to be taken up on a priority basis in backward rural and tribal areas so as to reach the most deprived groups. Creation of new facilities would have to be linked up to the actual needs of different regions and areas in the country. Besides, the imbalances in the creation of infrastructure and its utilisation between the rich and poorer sections and the urban and the rural areas would have to be corrected so as to bring socially deprived groups and the general population into the educational system.

Within the field of education, priority would have to be attached to children in pre-school age. Besides, socially under-privileged groups would have to be encouraged to send their children, particularly girls, to elementary schools. At present the pre-school child care programmes are, by and large, confined to the distribution of food supplements. A comprehensive programme for children in the age group 0-3 and *Balwadis* for the 3-6 age groups, by providing educational toys, play equipment, learning materials, etc., would have to be developed. The plan recognises the

importance of the pre-school period and aims at serving the needs of children in rural and urban slum areas. At least one early childhood education centre in every community development block is proposed to be set up within the plan period. Such centres would be developed to the maximum extent possible as adjuncts to village primary schools. Various programmes coming from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Welfare and other agencies would have to be coordinated at this level. Pre-school education would concentrate on the inculcation of right attitudes and values among children through the innovative use of locally available resources.

The programme of universalisation of elementary education would have to be given adequate attention, particularly in the educationally backward States so as to reach the disadvantaged children. This scheme would have to attempt at fuller utilisation of the existing facilities, including adjustments in schooling hours and promotion of non-formal systems of learning. Both formal and non-formal systems of education would have to emphasise the retention of students, and the programme of universalisation would imply additional enrolment of about 170 lakh children in classes I to V over the next five years. The present rate of actual enrolment has to be increased from about 24 lakhs to about 34 lakhs children per annum.

Non-formal educational programmes are being expanded in the light of the experience gained. About 80 lakh children are proposed to be covered under this programme. This scheme requires considerable imagination and innovation as the requirements vary considerably from one region to the other and among various socio-economic groups. The plan attaches importance to non-formal education for adults particularly in the productive age-group of 15-35 years. While designing this programme special emphasis would have to be laid on enlisting weaker groups like women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, agricultural labourers and slum dwellers. The strategy for these groups

would have to focus on the development of methods and content suited to requirements in different circumstances. Voluntary agencies also would have to be involved so that they would be in a position to respond to the local requirements in a more flexible manner.

HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING

Investments on health would have to be viewed in totality as a part of the strategy of human resource development. Unless adequate linkages with related programmes like improvement of environmental sanitation and hygiene, nutrition, water supply, education, family planning and maternity and child welfare are established, health programmes are not likely to make a dent on the incidence of morbidity and mortality patterns. Since the policy of providing health for all by 2,000 A.D. has been accepted, the present health care system would have to be strengthened and reoriented accordingly. The development of infrastructure would have to be shifted in favour of rural health problems. For this purpose, a combination of preventive and curative health care services, particularly in rural areas, has to be evolved. The setting up of one primary health centre for a population of 30,000 and a sub-centre for 5,000 are envisaged in this endeavour. These norms are being relaxed for hilly and tribal areas depending on their requirements. Emphasis would have to be placed on the training of medical and para-medical personnel for meeting the requirements of the expanded health care system. The community health volunteer scheme would have to be expanded after evaluating the present performance with a view to promoting health consciousness among the rural population. Besides, diseases like tuberculosis, gastro-intestinal infections, malaria, infectious hepatitis, rabies, hook-worm, etc. would have to be controlled.

Critical importance will have to be attached to programmes relating to the promotion of the small family norm. The Plan has recognised that the average size of the family

will have to be reduced from 4.2 to 2.3 children by 2,001 A.D. For this purpose, the birth rate per thousand population would have to be brought down from 33 in 1979 to 21. The monthly bulletin of Family Welfare Statistics (March 1980) shows that only 22 per cent of the eligible couples have been protected with family planning services. This percentage would have to be increased to 60. The population limitation ultimately has to be achieved by persuading people to adopt small families. Besides, family planning would have to be made a part of the total national effort for improving the quality of life. The problem of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy also would have to be tackled in order to make the family planning programme and health care systems successful.

HOUSING AND WATER SUPPLY

Clean environment and provision of safe drinking water and sanitation are essential for all human settlements. The prevailing methods of excreta and other waste material disposal are serious health hazards. The environmental sanitation and other infrastructural conditions have been neglected in the past in many cities. Similarly, housing conditions for very large numbers need considerable improvement. Many settlements in rural areas are yet to have even one source of potable safe drinking water supply.

In this Plan, emphasis is being given to the provision of house sites and financial assistance for the construction of dwellings for landless agricultural labourers. Housing programmes will have to be directed for benefiting economically weaker sections. Emphasis will be placed on the environmental improvement of slums in place of their relocation. Facilities for provision of water supply, storm water drainage, pavement of streets, street lighting and community latrines will have to be accorded greater attention. The coverage of problem villages with the provision of safe drinking water and improvement of the existing sources will also have to be made. Proper maintenance and involvement of local

communities would go a long way to ensure adequate supply of water from the existing sources.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Social welfare is concerned mainly with child welfare, women welfare, welfare of the handicapped and social defence programmes. Some of the principal problems facing women and children in this field are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Women in the age-group 15-45 constitute nearly 22 per cent of the total population. Health and nutrition status, living conditions, levels of literacy, and opportunities for employment to a vast majority of these women and particularly to those living in remote rural areas and urban slums are extremely poor. A large number lack adequate diet, nutrients, hygiene, environment and protected water supply. Due to these and other interrelated factors their capacity to resist common diseases and ailments is poor. Maternal mortality rates in India are very high as compared to neighbouring countries. They are much higher in rural and tribal areas and among lower socio-economic groups.

Studies undertaken by the National Institute of Nutrition, Colleges of Home Sciences, and Social and Preventive Medicine Departments reveal widespread malnutrition among adult women in the reproductive-cum-working age group. A high rate of prevalence of anaemia among pregnant women is also observed. Moreover, 90 per cent of the deliveries even today are handled by untrained *daïs*, more so in rural areas. The network of primary health centres and sub-centres which has been developed in the last twenty years is yet to give effective service to pregnant and nursing mothers and look after their health problems. Inadequate nutrition, lack of proper health care, ignorance, illiteracy, and certain social beliefs account for high mortality rates.

The female literacy rate had increased from 8 to 18.6 per cent between 1951 and 1971. By 1981 the rate had gone up to 24.88 per cent.

The total number of illiterate females had gone up from 6 crores in 1951 to 21 crores in 1971 and to 25 crores in 1981. Of the 352 districts in 1971, the rural female literacy rate was below 5 per cent in 83 districts and between 5 to 7.5 per cent in 58, and 7.5 to 10 per cent in 55 districts. The literacy rate among tribal women went up in 1971 to 4.9 per cent from the level of 3.2 per cent reached in 1961. Of the 475 tribes, 386 tribes in 1971 were at less than 5 per cent literacy rate. There are many tribes which are still at zero or near zero level of female literacy. A large number of tribes are yet to produce even a single woman matriculate. Literacy trends, particularly among females, show that the general educational infrastructure has not been effective to the desired extent in retaining girl students and ensuring their promotion to higher classes.

Women have been participating in large numbers in agriculture, trade and commerce and social services. Recent studies have pointed to the fact that the rate of participation in social services has gone up but has declined in agriculture, trade and commerce. Many of the existing training programmes have been primarily designed to train men, even though a large number of women are participating in various activities. This is a major deficiency which is still continuing.

Suicides among young married girls is being increasingly reported in some parts of the country. This is due to the evils of the dowry system and problems arising from maladjustment among kinship groups. Some of the existing factory and industrial regulations tend to place women in a disadvantageous position. These have to be identified and necessary amendments will have to be carried out.

Problems relating to children are as acute, if not more, as those relating to women. The longevity of the general population has gone up in the last thirty years. However, it is still low as compared to other countries due to high infant mortality rates and low rates of survival beyond 60 years of age. The 1971 Census reveals that 42 per cent of the total population,

21.3 crores, was in the age-group 0-14 years and 11.5 crores in the age-group 0-6. Estimates for 1981 show that the percentage of children in the age-group 0-14 comes to 38.6 per cent and of children in the age-group 0-6 to about 16 per cent. Of the former about 19 crores are in rural areas.

These young children are the most vulnerable category both in terms of their nutritional status and health requirements. Of the total deaths in India, about 40 per cent are reported to occur in the age group 0-5 years. About 14 per cent of children die before they reach one year of their age. The infant mortality in India is 126 per thousand live births (1978) as compared to 100.4 in Egypt (1974), 49.7 in Mexico (1975), 125 in Indonesia (1962), 45 in Sri Lanka (1972) and 26.3 in Thailand (1975).¹ More than half of the total deaths in developing countries occur among children in the 0-5 years age group.

Recent advances in the public health services and availability of medicines have made considerable impact on the mortality and morbidity patterns. A child born in India today has a much better chance of survival than a child born thirty years ago. However, infant mortality even today is six to seven times higher than that obtaining in the advanced countries of the world. While major epidemics have been more or less controlled, dysentery, diarrhoea and respiratory diseases, gastro-intestinal disorders, measles and tuberculosis are yet to be fully tackled. These diseases account for 50 per cent of deaths in India. Technology for bringing down the mortality rate is available in the country and has to be taken to rural areas, urban slums and tribal areas. Knowledge of public health and medical care has to be disseminated.

Nutritional inadequacies among children contribute substantially to frequent illnesses and low growth patterns. Data collected by the National Institute of Nutrition indicate that nearly 100,000 children die of malnutrition every year. Those who survive are generally subjected to brain damage and physical impairment. It has been estimated that about

56 crores are malnourished and 2.5 crores go blind because of vitamin 'A' deficiency. Lack of proper medical care and safe drinking water, illiteracy and lack of knowledge of nutritional requirements are some of the important reasons for malnutrition and diseases among children. Social and cultural beliefs associated with dietary habits aggravate the problem further.

Problems relating to a vast number of physically and mentally handicapped persons need to be tackled in a progressive and phased manner. Education, employment and rehabilitation are the main services through which this segment of society could be assisted to become self-reliant.

Similarly, preventive, correctional, rehabilitative and welfare programmes for social deviants will have to be undertaken, keeping in view their peculiar needs and conditions.

SUGGESTED AREAS FOR ACTION

Schemes in the State sector in the next ten years will have to be oriented to generate more employment, particularly in rural areas. A large share of this new employment and self-employment in sectors like small and cottage industries, trading and commercial services should be given to women. In cooperative and credit societies, women's participation should be considerably increased. Financial institutions should offer liberal credit facilities for encouraging women to take up self-employment programmes. In all the training programmes, particularly agriculture, more representation should be given to women. The Equal Remuneration Act and the Minimum Wages Act in both organised and unorganised sectors should be effectively implemented. Women's employment should be stepped up considerably in the fields of teaching, nursing, family welfare, medical and other professions and secretarial services.

Better utilisation of integrated maternal and child health centres should be aimed at. Ways and means of changing the present pattern of

health delivery system from the clinical to the extension approach will have to be devised. Health education should be given high priority in rural areas. Environmental sanitation, nutrition education, etc. have to be combined to make a better impact on child and mother health. Immunisation services hardly cover 15 to 20 percent of the rural children. The present mechanism is not adequate to extend this coverage beyond 60 to 70 per cent. This needs to be examined and ways have to be found to extend immunisation services to a larger number of children. Pregnant and nursing mothers will have to be identified and proper services should be given to them so that maternal mortality could be brought down. This will also ensure better health of the new born babies, also many deformities at birth could be prevented.

The levels of enrolment are very low for girls, more so in rural and tribal areas. Likewise, wastage and stagnation rates are also very high. The existing schemes have to be strengthened to attract more girls to schools. Greater community involvement and participation for families and local leadership has to be ensured for making this programme a success. For school drop-outs, functional literacy should be initiated.

Various social services which are now being implemented and are proposed to be extended would have to be coordinated and integrated for maximising and reinforcing their impact on the beneficiaries. This should be effectively done at the block level. Block Panchayat Samiti, Block Development Officer and the voluntary organisations will have to be effectively involved in supervision and implementation of programmes.

Welfare services in several States are at present scattered under different administrative agencies. Therefore, there is no coordinated overview of this sector. They will have to be brought under a single agency to achieve integrated planning and development. Planning units and the departments of social services will have to be strengthened for

undertaking these programmes. The research and evaluation base for project identification and formulation has to be considerably improved. Project identification and formulation have to be subjected to detailed scrutiny with a view to reducing the costs of the building component and the administrative overheads. Also, models with least cost options will have to be evolved to assist final selection. Besides, sponsoring of various socio-economic surveys to bring out the problems of different regions and communities will have to be taken up in a systematic manner for providing an adequate data base. Research objectives would have to be reoriented towards special problems. Monitoring of various programmes in social services is extremely weak. This needs to be strengthened. A large number of programmes which are under implementation in the last twenty years have not been subjected to evaluation, this has to be undertaken urgently with a view to assessing how far these programmes are meeting their objectives.

Orientation programmes for personnel engaged in social services will have to be undertaken in a big way to apprise them with the developments. Experience shows that many persons working at the field level in different programmes are not sufficiently familiar with the programme objectives and details of programme implementation.

In the past, due to lack of proper supervision, the implementation of schemes and also standards of services delivered by them have suffered to some extent. This needs to be rectified by providing more personnel for supervision at the field level.

The budgetary pattern at the block level does not provide for flexibility for undertaking programmes for meeting the specific needs of different areas. Some flexibility needs to be provided in the present budgetary mechanism.

The involvement of *Panchayati Raj* institutions and voluntary organisations has fallen short of expectations. Due to lack of an adequate organisational base at the field level and also due to local factions in *Panchayati*

Raj institutions, their involvement in the implementation of programmes has not been effective. Therefore ways and means would have to be devised for effectively involving these institutions and other voluntary bodies.

For successful implementation of these programmes, mere governmental allocations and a bureaucratic approach will not be adequate. The planning effort has to be supplemented to a large extent by voluntary organisations, schools of social work and other research organisations concerned with these aspects of development. Unfortunately, these agencies and universities and academic institutions have not been fully associated with various aspects of policy formulation and programme review at the State level.

Voluntary organisations have been largely concentrated in the past in urban and metropolitan areas. It is important that they spread out to rural areas to undertake developmental activities. While formulating schemes, especially in the field of social services, rural people's participation has to be clearly envisaged. *Panchayati Raj* institutions, *Mahila Mandals*, youth clubs, and some non-formal local leaders have to be fully associated with the implementation of these schemes. Without their active support and participation the schemes are not likely to succeed. They should be consulted even for identifying the felt needs at the community level.

Welfare schemes, particularly in view of the socio-economic and cultural diversity of the country, will have to vary in different States. Central programming in this area tends to be somewhat rigid. Therefore, greater initiative for the formulation of schemes and for providing larger allocations for the poorer sections has to come from the States.

In the long run, industrialisation of the economy, increase in the rate of growth in agriculture, increased employment opportunities, creation of a more equitable social structure and income distribution, dispersal of industrial growth to rural areas, and greater involvement of women and

voluntary agencies will go a long way in bringing about the climate of change and development needed for the well-being of children, women, the handicapped and other sections.

K G KRISHNAMURTHY

NOTES

- 1 Demographic Year Book, 1976

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

The meaning and scope of social welfare vary from country to country reflecting the historical development and evolution of administrative organisation and structure, the stage and goals of development, the types of programmes and the scales of their operation, the allocation of responsibility between government and voluntary sectors, the socio-cultural framework, etc. Within a country, there exists a distinction between the concept of social welfare services (which is a quasi-theoretical exercise in abstraction of what may be desired, in a longer time perspective), the scope of social welfare services as operationalised in the plan (which has a shorter time perspective of usually five years), and the administrative responsibility of a Ministry or Department of Social Welfare for welfare services (which generally but not entirely corresponds to the plan).

Social welfare, in the traditional sense, meant relief, curative and rehabilitative services for a target group, namely, the clients of welfare. It concerned itself more with trying to solve the problems of the clients after they had arisen. It was basically micro-oriented in approach. The primary motivating forces were

humanitarianism and charity. Welfare, thus viewed, was not considered by and large as a development concern but rather as one of the late entrants for co-sharing whatever 'surpluses' could be 'spared'.

The utter inadequacy of this approach, specially in the context of developing countries where poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, high infant mortality, malnutrition and poor housing afflict a very large segment of the population and are to a very large extent responsible for the problems which required a welfare intervention, led to the evolution of the developmental approach and thrust to welfare to make it an integral part of the development process. Thus conceived, welfare would imply as much concern for the traditional clients of welfare services, as for the well-being of the underprivileged and handicapped sections of society, which gets reflected through a variety of policy and programme options in different sectors, both economic and social, that would enable the individual and the group to realise their full potentialities of development. In this reasoning, social welfare becomes synonymous with social development, but is retained in preference to the latter which is at the moment more of the nature of a concept or movement that is struggling to have an accepted body of theory and practice. The variety of usages and understandings regarding the concept and scope of social development have not helped to provide a common base for discussion.

At the global level, too, in various seminars and conferences, organised by the United Nations and other international agencies, the question of definition of social welfare has cropped up as also the issue whether it should be considered a field, a goal, a method or a process or, for pragmatic reasons, related to the current administrative responsibilities in social welfare in a country which defines the practice, or related to the plan document which describes the philosophy, the objectives, the instruments and the fields. The question of defining social welfare primarily in terms of the philosophy, methods and fields of professional work, though not necessarily limited by it, has

also cropped up. While there is a large degree of correspondence between them, they are not identical. Furthermore, social welfare problems are multi-dimensional, requiring an inter-disciplinary approach and inter-sectoral integration of policies and programmes, the extent of use of skills of professional social work would, therefore, depend upon the nature of the intervention strategy and the programmes. It is generally agreed that any definition of social welfare should be comprehensive enough to indicate not only the custodial and remedial functions of social welfare but also its preventive and developmental functions and the changes that are taking place in programmes and activities in social welfare in response to the changing scene; it should include social welfare inputs in areas of health, education, housing, rural development, urban renewal, etc.

A document prepared by the United Nations on "*Social Welfare Planning in the Context of National Development Plans*", after considering the definitions, scope and practice of social welfare in different countries, defined social welfare as follows: "For planning purposes, the field of social welfare can be defined as a body of organised activities which are basically meant to enable individuals, groups and communities to improve their own situation, adjust to changing conditions and participate in the tasks of development. These activities, requiring special skills in social diagnosis, human relations and informal education among others, can be differentiated for instance from the body of health services or from the basic facilities available for formal education and vocational training. Some of the social welfare activities play a supportive role in helping achieve the planning objectives of related sectors (self-help housing or motivational work for family planning, for instance). Some are meant to enable local citizens to participate in self-help projects and help to create the social climate that is an essential condition of development. Some of the social welfare activities are aimed more

directly at helping vulnerable groups or categories of people to achieve, to the greatest extent possible, the minimum social standards".¹

TRENDS BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

Before considering the strategy and approach to social welfare in the five year plans, it is necessary briefly to recall the trends in the hundred years or so preceding independence. During this period, the approach to social welfare was more social problem and social reform oriented (prevention of *sati*, prevention of child marriage, widow marriage, etc.) with interest focused on basic structural and institutional reforms and changes in public attitudes and opinions. There was considerable public involvement in the discussion of social problems and their solution, in which the press also played a leading part. Social welfare programmes during the period were basically indigenous in thought, objectives, content and implementation. There were, however, some exceptions, such as the welfare organisations started by missionaries or the social defence legislation which was influenced by British enactments. There was greater stress in the services on maintenance, care and rehabilitation. The patronage of national leaders who, despite their involvement in the struggle for independence, devoted time and energy for welfare work, was instrumental in the establishment of welfare organisations with which they retained close contact. The role of the State in the execution of welfare programmes was negligible. The services established through voluntary effort were unevenly spread, depending upon the existence of responsive workers and appropriate leadership. The institutions were generally personality oriented and their functioning was not institutionalized. The welfare response was generally *ad hoc* and spontaneous. While they lacked professionalism in the modern connotation of the term, they were imbued

with considerable fervour and dedication of the workers, humanitarianism and voluntariness

SOCIAL WELFARE IN THE PLANS

For the promotion of welfare in its wider sense, a positive role for the State is envisaged in the Directive Principles of State Policy and in other Articles relating to women, children and other disadvantaged sections of society through provisions relating to education, nutrition, public assistance, employment, health, etc. The launching of the five year plans in India gave a concrete shape to the efforts for realising the goals and aspirations as laid down in the Constitution.

The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) gives the scope of social welfare services in very comprehensive terms. "The object of social welfare is the attainment of social health which implies the realization of such objectives as adequate living standards, the assurance of social justice, opportunities for cultural development through individual and group expressions and readjustment of human relations leading to social harmony". Subsequent sections describe the programmes and policies pertaining to welfare of women, children, youth, the family, under-privileged groups, social defence and welfare of the handicapped. Youth movements, the scout movements, youth counselling, youth and volunteer services and national physical fitness are also discussed. However, the comprehensive view of welfare was not backed by outlays, as only Rs. 4 crores were allotted. The administrative infrastructure for social welfare services was very weak with no Ministry or Department for social welfare at the Centre or in the States. The most significant development in the First Plan was the setting up of the Central Social Welfare Board in 1953 to promote and assist voluntary effort.

The Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) maintains the comprehensive note struck in the First Plan. "Social Welfare is concerned with the well-being of the entire community and not

only of particular sections of the population which may be handicapped in one way or the other". It draws attention, however, to the gap between the aims of welfare and the rate of growth of welfare services, and states that the growth of services is a slow process, the constraint of resources and other factors (lack of trained personnel and organisations and lack of data) tending to limit the immediate objectives of social welfare services to groups which are in a vulnerable position or need special attention. The programmes of this sector discussed in the five year plan document relate to social legislation, welfare of women and children, family welfare, youth welfare, physical and mental fitness, correctional administration, welfare of the handicapped and prohibition. The Second Plan provided an outlay of Rs. 19 crores. Among the important programmes launched during this period were the condensed courses of education for women and the socio-economic programmes for women in need of work and wages.

The Third Five Year Plan (1961-66) is more specific: "Welfare services are directed in particular towards those sections of the community which need special care and attention". The programmes discussed in this document relate mainly to women and child welfare, social defence, welfare of the handicapped, grant-in-aid to voluntary organisations, training, and research and administration. A significant development was the establishment of a Department of Social Welfare in the Central Government in 1964, thus providing for the first time a full-fledged administrative set-up to promote, sponsor, direct and implement welfare services. The major schemes undertaken during this period were social and moral hygiene and after-care programmes, pre-vocational training centres, integrated services for child welfare demonstration projects, Baldevika training centres, grants-in-aid to voluntary organisations working in the field of social welfare, welfare of inmates of permanent liability homes and infirmaries, condensed courses of education for women, socio-

economic programmes for women in need of work and wages, education and training centres for the handicapped, scholarships to the handicapped, etc

The Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74) provided a larger allocation (Rs 76 81 crores), but made somewhat modest claims about the scope of social welfare and the role of the State. It observed that the government can attempt only limited tasks in trying to ensure optimal benefits from both State and voluntary efforts. Such tasks will include various types of assistance—monetary, technical and administrative—to voluntary organisations. Some of the schemes implemented during the plan were family and child welfare projects, supplementary nutrition feeding, grants-in-aid to voluntary organisation, research, training, rehabilitation services and placement services for the physically handicapped, educational work in favour of prohibition, socio-economic programmes for women in need of work and wages, condensed courses of education for adult women, etc

The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) took a more expansive view of the role of the State in the organisation of welfare services in contrast to the restricted role visualised in the Fourth Plan. Also, in refreshing contrast to the earlier plans, it emphasised the developmental orientation to the approach and strategy for social welfare and the role of preventive services and of programmes which would enable the physically and socially handicapped to realise their full potentialities for growth and development and bring them into the mainstream of national development. It also stressed the need for integration with programmes in other social and economic sectors, integration with the minimum needs programmes (incorporated for the first time in the Fifth Plan) and integration with the overall strategy for removal of poverty. It called for the expansion of services for the socially and the physically handicapped and the promotion and sponsorship of voluntary effort. To an extent, the development orientation to welfare in Indian planning reflected the deliberations

and recommendations of the International Conference of Ministers Responsible for Social Welfare (1968). The Fifth Plan allocated a marginally higher outlay (Rs 86 13 crores), but provided for the launching of several new programmes on a national scale such as integrated child development services, services for children in need of care and protection, functional literacy, creches for children, integrated education, etc. It also witnessed the adoption of the National Policy on Children in 1974, the setting up of the National Children's Board, with the Prime Minister as chairman, and a considerable strengthening of the administrative infrastructure at the Centre for implementing services. The Sixth Plan (1980-85) reiterated the approach and strategy outlined in the Fifth Plan and indicated that it supplements the general development programmes for the disadvantaged. Larger outlays were provided for social welfare schemes (Rs 271 97 crores). Apart from sizable expansion of some schemes like integrated child development services, some new schemes like aids and appliances for the physically handicapped were introduced.

MAIN FEATURES

In the three decades of development planning beginning in 1951, the main trends in the development of social welfare services may be briefly stated as follows:

(1) In the five year plans, social welfare has not included in its purview social security, which currently covers only work force in the organised sector and includes pension, provident fund, gratuity and other retirement benefits, medical care, compensatory payments, etc., under various legislative and administrative measures within the administrative jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labour.

In the earlier plans, public assistance programmes (cash assistance) were kept outside the purview of the plan and the States were expected to meet these requirements from the non-plan budget. Old age public assistance

programmes of the nature of non-contributory old age pension are being financed in almost all the States from their non-plan budgets. They owe their existence to administrative orders and non-statutory notifications. Lately, the severely physically handicapped and widows have been brought within the purview of such assistance in several States. But here again, cash assistance is granted on the criteria of absence of income or very poor income, absence of near family members who have the social obligation to support, etc., the governing consideration being that but for such pension, the person would be destitute.

(2) Unlike many other countries, the development of social welfare services in India has taken place outside the statutory framework except in the case of (i) social defence which has a legislative history of more than a hundred years (such enactments in India being generally a sequel to similar enactments in Britain), and (ii) social reforms where, too, legislative history goes back to the pre-independence period and was conceived more as measures to prohibit, regulate, control and reform, rather than to lay the foundations for the development of social welfare services. Social reform legislations have, however, suffered considerably from weak enforcement and have not generally been instrumental in the development of services.

(3) The outlay for the social welfare sector in absolute terms has shown an increase from Rs 4 crores in the First Plan to Rs 272 crores in the Sixth Plan. However, the allocation in terms of proportion of total public sector outlay has remained less than 0.5 percent. Even in the Sixth Plan, it is only 0.28 percent of the total public sector outlay. If only the State plans are considered, the outlay for social welfare sector is 0.25 percent of the total State plan outlay. However, there is variation between States/Union Territories—in 12 States/Union Territories, the percentage outlay for social welfare is less than 0.25 percent, in 11 States/Union Territories it is between 0.25 and 0.50 percent, in 5 States/Union Territories it is between 0.50 and 0.99

percent, and in 3 Union Territories it is between 1.00 percent and 1.50 percent. If only the Central plan outlay is considered, the percentage outlay for social welfare is 0.32 percent.

The availability of resources for programmes in the social welfare sector has thus been extraordinarily low, reflecting the low priority it has received. The Working Groups constituted by the Planning Commission for advising on the sectoral five year plan for social welfare have recommended outlays and programmes which have not, however, found a place in the plans. It should, however, be clarified that in India, several programmes for the social and the physically handicapped, and the underprivileged sections of society are implemented in the plan in other social services sectors as well (mainly in the sectors of education, nutrition, health and family welfare, labour welfare, backward classes welfare, rural development, cooperation, etc.) and therefore the totality of the input is much larger than may appear from outlays specifically indicated for social welfare.

(4) Central and State allocations of financial resources for the plans show a wide divergence. In the Constitution, the term social welfare does not occur either in the Union List, the State List or the Concurrent List. However, while some items falling within the purview of social welfare occur in these lists, others do not find an entry in either of the lists. Both the Central and State Governments have therefore a responsibility for the promotion of welfare services. This responsibility is discharged in programme and financial terms through the classification of plan schemes into Central, Centrally sponsored and State plan schemes. Over the years, there has been a demand by the States, in general terms, to reduce the number of Central sponsored schemes and allocate the resources to the States as they have viewed Centrally sponsored schemes as an encroachment by the Centre into the States' spheres of action.

Generally speaking, initiatives in policy making, planning and programming in a

number of spheres have come from the Centre and are to some extent a reflection of the system of planning as also the low priority accorded by the States to the sector of social welfare. This is seen in the pattern of outlays at the Centre and the States. The proportion of Plan outlays at the Centre (Central schemes + Centrally sponsored schemes) and the States has varied from plan to plan. In the Fourth Plan, only 28.9 percent of the total social welfare outlay was allocated to the States, in the Fifth Plan, the percentage was 26.2. In the Sixth Plan the percentage of outlay allocated to the States is 44.8. A noticeable feature is the much higher percentage increase in outlays in the State plans for social welfare. In the case of the Central plan, the outlay has increased from Rs. 63.53 crores in the Fifth Plan to Rs. 150.00 crores in the Sixth Plan (about two and a half times), in the plans of States/Union Territories, however, the increase is from Rs. 22.60 crores in the Fifth Plan to Rs. 121.97 crores in the Sixth Plan (more than five times).

The pattern of financial assistance for Centrally sponsored schemes which in the earlier plans was shared between the Centre and the States (it varied from 50 to 100 percent for different schemes in the social welfare sector) was modified later and was fully met by the Centre in the Fourth and Fifth Plans. However, the principle of sharing was revived in the Sixth Plan and two patterns are in evidence in the social welfare sector—100 percent central assistance for two schemes, and 50 percent central assistance for three schemes.

(5) Both in the Centre and in the States the budget provision in the earlier plan periods has been generally less than the plan outlay. For instance, in the Fourth Plan, as against a plan outlay of Rs. 80.96 crores, Rs. 76.62 crores was provided in the budgets. However in the Sixth Plan, for the sector as a whole as well as for several schemes the plan outlay is likely to be exceeded, as in the first three years, the budget provision was 72.3 percent of the Sixth Plan outlay.

(6) The extent of utilisation of budget provision has improved over the years both at

the Centre and in the States. In the earlier years, there was surrender of funds particularly in regard to new schemes because of delays in getting them approved, inadequate administrative machinery, particularly in the States, and the absence of viable agencies or institutions which could absorb the funds. For instance, in the Fourth Plan, the percentage of budgetary utilisation at the Centre was 86.89 percent, in the Fifth Plan it improved to 93.02, subsequently it has been more than 95 percent. However, there is considerable variation between schemes in regard to the utilisation of budget provision. While in the case of some there have been fairly large reappropriations to permit larger expenditure than was originally budgeted for, in the case of other schemes there have been significant shortfalls.

(7) There has been a qualitative change in the types of programmes that are now being undertaken in the social welfare sector, and in the scale of their operations. The horizon for social welfare programmes is becoming more comprehensive, the emphasis shifting to developmental programmes rather than schemes of care and setting up of institutions for catering only to individuals with problems. Thus, for instance, development of children from under-privileged sections of society through a range of enabling programmes like integrated child development services, creches, etc. are receiving high priority. The actual programming exercise shows a definite emphasis on services which are preventive or developmental in nature. Inter-sector linkages for different programmes are also now being more firmly tied up not only at the planning stage but also at different levels of implementation and machinery set up to coordinate the different arrangements. The scale of operations for some of the schemes also shows a significant increase. For instance, for the socio-economic programme for women in need of work and wages implemented by the Central Social Welfare Board, the total expenditure in the Fourth Plan (1969-74) was Rs. 8.32 lakhs, in 1980-81 alone it was Rs. 235 lakhs. Similarly, in the scheme of condensed

courses for education for adult women, the total expenditure in the Fourth Plan was Rs 78 92 lakhs, whereas in 1980-81 alone it was Rs. 125 lakhs. Several new schemes such as integrated child development services, creches, provision of aids and appliances to the physically handicapped, functional literacy for women, etc., have been introduced with sizeable allocations.

(8) In terms of allocation of outlays among different categories, child development has received the largest outlays, followed by women's welfare and welfare of the physically handicapped. In the Fifth Plan (1974-79), 59.6 percent of the expenditure in the Central plan in the social welfare sector was on child development, 20.5 percent on women's development, 12.1 percent on the welfare of the physically handicapped, and 7.8 percent on other programmes. In the Sixth Plan (1980-85), 51.5 percent of the outlay is on child development, 23.4 percent on women's development, 16.3 percent on welfare of the physically handicapped, and 8.8 percent on other programmes.

(9) A sizable part of the plan outlay at the Centre is utilised in the form of grant-in-aid to voluntary organisations for implementing approved schemes. In the Sixth Plan, for instance, approximately one half of the Central plan outlay is in the form of grant-in-aid to voluntary organisations mainly through the Central Social Welfare Board, but also directly by the Ministry of Social Welfare.

(10) There has been considerable strengthening of the administrative machinery for the formulation and implementation of social welfare schemes, particularly at the Centre. The first major landmark was the creation of a Department of Social Welfare at the Centre in 1964 and the creation of a separate Ministry of Social Welfare in 1979. The Department began to be headed by a Secretary from 1974. Three programme bureaux each headed by a Joint Secretary have been created. A separate Technical Division was created in 1974 for planning, research, evaluation and monitoring of social welfare

schemes. Similar strengthening has taken place in the Central Social Welfare Board and in the Planning Commission. Some other important landmarks have been the creation of the National Children's Board in 1974, with the Prime Minister as Chairman, the setting up of the National Committee on Women with the Prime Minister as Chairman; the inclusion of a separate chapter on women's development for the first time in the Sixth Plan; setting up and streamlining the machinery for coordination between different ministries; preparation of blueprints of plans of action for women, children and the handicapped; and strong advocacy roles during the International Women's Year (1975), International Year of the Child (1979), and International Year of Disabled Persons (1981).

Administrative machinery in the States has also developed, and several States now have a Secretary with sole or primary responsibility for social welfare. For planning, programming and implementation, most States now have separate Directorates of Social Welfare. At the district level, too, social welfare officers have been appointed in most of the States.

REVIEW

Despite gains in laying the foundations for the development of social welfare services through sizeable increase in allocations in recent years, strengthening of administrative machinery since the middle of the Fifth Plan, and a number of policy and programme initiatives with endorsement from the highest levels of decision making, some inadequacies are also evident. These may be briefly listed as follows:

(1) Planning and programming suffers due to extremely low outlays and uncertainty about the extent of outlays in the subsequent years. This affects the undertaking of preparatory work for the expansion of services in subsequent years. In the absence of a relatively smooth growth rate of outlays for different programmes, sudden spurts lead to considerable strains and tend to qualitatively

affect the programmes specially in spheres such as training of manpower. Arrangements for supportive services from other sectors also come under pressure

(2) Social security, particularly public assistance, has been kept outside the purview of the plan on the consideration that schemes such as old age pension (non-contributory cash assistance) are non-developmental. Closer scrutiny would, however, show that social welfare cannot divorce itself of humanitarian considerations. Furthermore, there is an element of arbitrariness in the sense that old age homes can be included as a plan scheme even though it is a more expensive form of care, but old age cash assistance for those in dire need cannot be classified as such. Fortunately, the Seventh Finance Commission has shown foresight and understanding and allowed for such expenditure in deciding on the devolution of resources to the States in their non-plan budgets

(3) The process of clearance of new plan schemes and modifications of existing schemes takes an unduly long time. The Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance separately examine the proposals made by the Ministry of Social Welfare and often a time-consuming process of several rounds of comments and clarifications follows instead of a joint meeting for deciding on the basic parameters within which a scheme is to be formulated. Even programmes recommended for inclusion by the Working Groups constituted for a five year plan do not have an easy passage

(4) The enforcement of measures of social legislation, specially those relating to women and children, has been very weak, in some cases like dowry, the problem has become aggravated despite the legislation prohibiting dowry. In the case of social defence legislation, the coverage as well as the organisation of services has been inadequate. For certain problem areas like adoption, it has not been possible to have even enabling legislation despite the urgings of several voluntary organisations. Social action, social reform,

social movements and social legislation which developed such close links under the leadership and guidance of the national leaders, even though they were then actively engaged in the struggle for independence, have, after independence, lost their dynamism and fervour and have chartered for themselves relatively independent paths

(5) The planning and administrative machinery for the programmes, particularly in the States/Union Territories, is rather weak. The State plans are often of the nature of aggregation of schemes and their financial requirements. In the States, the planning departments do not have a unit for social welfare; it is the State directorates/departments of social welfare which do the exercises relating to the plan and send them to the planning departments for incorporation in the State plan. Once a scheme has been launched, the general tendency is to resort to incremental budgeting with respect to the scheme, sometimes with a few modifications in regard to cost inputs or target beneficiary groups. Usually the scheme is not reviewed in the context of the problem and its changing nature and dimensions, and the overall intervention strategy that is needed. The machinery at the district levels for implementing social welfare schemes is weak and at the block level virtually non-existent. The machinery for supervision and inspection is also very inadequate and the positive role of supervision in promoting standards of services and in reinforcing the training and experience of the functionary is by and large not recognised. The situation is made worse by the relatively recent phenomenon of frequent transfers of Secretaries/Directors of Social Welfare which affects sound planning and implementation. Technical expertise in social welfare is very inadequately utilised, specially in planning, programming and implementation in the States

(6) There is weak coordination in planning and implementation at the State level between the State social welfare departments and the State social welfare advisory boards. Even the

promotion of the voluntary sector in the State and assistance to voluntary organisations are by and large independent endeavours and the coordination is more notional and of the nature of awareness rather than a partnership or joint sector role. In the earlier plans amounts disbursed by the CSWB to voluntary organisations in the States was small but in the Sixth Plan (1980-85), the Central Social Welfare Board has an outlay of Rs. 42 75 crores for giving as grants-in-aid to voluntary organisations as compared to an outlay of Rs 121 97 crores in the plans of States/Union Territories.

(7) The machinery for monitoring of programmes is rather weak and since most of the programmes are implemented in the States, the absence of an adequate infrastructure for monitoring has prevented a proper feedback being received both at the installation and implementation phases. At present the general practice is to closely oversee the progress in regard to expenditure, and numbers of institutions/beneficiaries in aggregate terms. Monitoring in terms of the objectives of the programme and the visualisation of the system as a multi-tiered pyramidal structure with technically trained staff, is by and large absent except in the case of the scheme for integrated child development services. Here, too, the extent of utilisation of the feedback at the State level shows considerable variation.

(8) While social welfare has been a low priority sector at the Centre and the States, it is virtually non-existent at the level of the local authorities which have shown only marginal interest in the promotion and development of welfare services. Panchayati Raj institutions and local bodies have been more concerned with catering to their conventional municipal functions, rather than expanding their horizons to meet at least some of the basic welfare needs.

(9) There is variation in the development of social welfare services not only between States but also within a State and between urban and rural areas and between the bigger cities and

the towns. This pattern has tended to reinforce itself over the years despite plan directives and attempts by the administration to rectify the situation. To some extent this is a reflection of the tendency for further development to be absorbed and pushed into areas which have the infrastructure and the capacity to utilise funds. A large number of schemes are operated through grants-in-aid to voluntary organisations. Therefore, areas which already have a developed voluntary effort and good leadership and can solicit funds are able to marshal more resources. The grant-in-aid mechanism has not been able to rectify the situation despite some concessions in this regard.

(10) The unevenness in the development of welfare services is not only in terms of geographical distribution but also in terms of types of services; for instance, there are large areas in the country which are not covered by services for different categories of the physically handicapped. Services in the urban areas have not developed extension wings to reach out to the rural areas. To a large extent, this is because even in the urban areas, despite the relatively greater availability in numerical terms, the services are still far short of requirements. The absence of local level organisations interested in welfare services has added to the problem. Furthermore, trained workers are not available in rural and tribal areas.

(11) Although there has been considerable expansion in the training of field level functionaries for different programmes and some schemes like the integrated child development services provide for inservice training, no manpower policy has emerged, whether in the Centre or in the States in regard to the employment and training of manpower, particularly at intermediate and higher levels. There is also a wide variation in training/orientation programmes in terms of duration, syllabus and methods of instruction. By and large, training programmes are heavily dependent on class room instruction rather

than on training on the job. They also suffer from deficiencies in the training infrastructure and training technology. The use of supervision as a tool to reinforce training is another problem area which has great potential but has not been used to the full.

(12) Since the Fifth Plan, the availability of data on the nature and dimensions of different problems and on the implementation of different schemes has improved due to the statistics generated by organisations like the Census, the National Sample Survey Organisation, research sponsored by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Indian Council of Social Science Research, University Grants Commission and others and statistics compiled by different ministries. The utilisation of research and evaluation studies and social statistics to improve programme planning and implementation is, however, unsatisfactory. This problem is particularly noticeable in planning, programming and implementation at the State level.

(13) There is no structure for regulating, inspecting, promoting and ensuring standards of services or for accrediting/licencing of institutions before they are allowed to organise services or to receive funds. This has resulted in considerable variation in the types of services that are given, physical and other facilities that are available, and the employment of trained manpower.

SUGGESTIONS

In a country like India in which almost half the population belong to the economically disadvantaged category, social welfare policies and programmes are very clearly linked with the general development of the country, the development of social services, and the rise in social and economic status of the population. Nonetheless, some of the more important areas of action could be outlined.

(1) Social welfare should be given a higher planning priority and outlays provided accordingly. Social welfare should not be considered by planners as only a relief or

custodial activity or a humanitarian service. Its vital role in anti-poverty development strategies and in human resource development has to be recognised.

(2) Destitution had historically been the first charge of social welfare and a large number of countries have provided social security coverage in a variety of ways for such an exigency. In the earlier phases, this was more in the nature of providing relief after destitution had arisen, in the current phase, the trend is to prevent such destitution from occurring through a range of social security measures. In our country, while comprehensive social security of the nature of non-contributory cash assistance and medical care is still a distant goal, it is nonetheless necessary to consolidate the beginnings in most of the States/Union Territories for provision of cash assistance on a monthly basis to the old, the handicapped, the widowed and similar categories who are very poor and have no close relatives to support them. The implementation of these schemes should be taken over by the social welfare department. It would equally be necessary to have a wide range of institutional and non-institutional services for children, women and the physically handicapped who are on the verge of destitution but who can be helped to realise their full potentialities for growth and development and become self-reliant. Some kind of social security coverage for the self-employed and wage earners in the unorganised sectors should also be considered.

(3) The preventive and developmental orientation of social welfare has to be considerably strengthened. This would also imply considerable strengthening of its coordinating, promotional and joint sectoral roles so that the numbers needing curative and rehabilitative services are reduced, and the under-privileged and handicapped groups are brought into the mainstream of national development.

(4) The formulation of social welfare strategies and intervention programmes should not depend only on analysis of the past

experience or the present needs. It is very necessary to undertake futuristic exercises so that new and emerging social problems are anticipated and alternative intervention strategies considered well in advance. Social welfare should widen its horizons to include social problems, social issues and social aspects of economic development so that it can interact with other sectors and facilitate preparation of integrated economic development programmes in which the social dimensions are not lost sight of.

(5) The planning machinery for welfare services needs to be considerably streamlined, particularly at the State and the district level, by having professionally trained staff to undertake more systematic plan formulation for the sector, involving problem identification and problem analysis; evaluative review of existing strategies and services and levels of development; formulation of the intervention strategy, drawing up schemes, monitoring the progress of schemes; compilation of statistics, and evaluation. The plan exercise should take into account not only the public sector but also the voluntary sector and the non-plan expenditure. The planning team should be multi-disciplinary, as most of the social welfare schemes require an inter-sectoral approach.

(6) The administrative machinery for social welfare at the State, district and block levels needs to be made extension-oriented, moving out to reach people. It should be considerably strengthened, specially since the allocations for welfare services are now increasing and there is a much wider range of programmes. All social welfare subjects should be provided within the purview of one department with a whole-time Secretary. Transfer of senior personnel should take place only after a reasonable period so that there is some continuity in policy.

(7) Mechanisms have to be developed for closer coordination and integration at the State, district and field level between the State Government and the State Social Welfare Advisory Board; the various departments concerned, specially those engaged in rural

development, should also effectively coordinate their programmes.

(8) With the considerable expansion of services at the field level, it has become necessary to consider the pattern of administrative integration and coordination to minimise on the number of functionaries at the delivery points. This should take into consideration both economic development and social development functionaries. The delivery system has to be streamlined and closely monitored.

(9) The machinery for monitoring social welfare schemes should be strengthened. The monitoring exercise should not be limited to installation of services and spending the budgetary provisions but should focus on achievements in relation to the objectives of the schemes. The monitoring system should be multi-tiered with properly trained staff at different levels—block, district, State and the Centre.

(10) The location and distribution of social welfare services should be carefully planned so that over a period of time every block and district has at least the basic services. Convergence or integration of services should not be taken to imply starving other areas of services.

(11) The training/orientation of manpower for social welfare needs to be looked into. The orientation of decision-makers in planning and finance departments on the preventive and developmental functions of social welfare will help dispel the notion that social welfare is only limited to curative, rehabilitative and humanitarian functions. For those directly involved in the administration of social development programmes, short and long courses should be developed at senior and middle levels as well. Training of field level functionaries will achieve better results when the middle and senior levels too have the training/orientation so that supervision becomes an input in the qualitative improvement of the services. The technology of training needs to be carefully gone into so

that it is more practice-oriented. The infrastructure and training requirements of the training institutions need to be carefully gone into. Schools of Social Work should be involved in the training of field level functionaries on a regular basis.

(12) The promotion of voluntary effort and financial support to them have been accepted as a matter of policy. Yet there are vast areas and fields which are uncovered. These have to be carefully gone into so that the grant-in-aid policy is able to look into special needs and requirements and a more responsive policy can be formulated by adopting a differential system depending on geographical area, target group, level of development and programme priorities. Voluntary agencies, too, require to be oriented with the administrative and financial requirements that have to be complied with where public funds are involved.

(13) Schools of Social Work have at the present moment limited interaction with the social welfare directorates/departments in the States. Social Work graduates do not get preference in the matter of employment in social welfare positions. The role of Schools of Social Work needs to be carefully considered so that they can enhance their effectiveness as agencies for training social welfare manpower at graduate and post-graduate level and as institutions with potential for training field level functionaries, and research, evaluation, documentation and professional advice.

(14) Research, evaluation and compilation of statistics should be strengthened for better planning and implementation. It is also necessary to bring about changes in the present situation whereby rather limited use is made of research and evaluation studies in planning, programming and implementation. Decision-makers must insist on data being provided to them so that research and evaluation are not desirable appendages but functionally useful instruments in the planning and administrative system.

(15) Malnutrition, infant mortality and morbidity are major problems afflicting Indian

children. These problems are largely the outcome of poverty, illiteracy, ignorance of the mother about nutrition and health, high fertility, poor environmental sanitation and hygiene, non-availability of drinking water, etc. Although the intervention strategy for tackling the problems of malnutrition and infant mortality has necessarily to be multi-sectoral, it would, nonetheless, be necessary for the Ministry of Social Welfare to have a strong promotional and monitoring role in the relevant sectoral programmes. In the case of children in need of care and protection, the intervention strategy should provide a wide range of institutional and non-institutional services, particularly the latter, both within and outside the statutory framework of Children Acts. Programmes like Integrated Child Development Services, which are basically preventive and developmental in nature, should be expanded. Employment of children as wage earners below the age of 12 years should be prohibited. Even when they work as family workers or are self-employed due to economic necessity, supportive services would be necessary for their education and training. The employment of older children should be regulated, with facilities provided for their protection and development.

(16) In the case of women, development strategy has been to ensure that they are brought into the mainstream and are able to get their due share from the general sectors of development, particularly education, employment, health and nutrition. Their special problems, needs and handicaps, a number of which are the products of the existing social and economic systems, have to be given due cognisance and special provisions made where necessary so that they are able to take full advantage of development programmes. The Ministry of Social Welfare should play a close monitoring and coordinating role at the Centre as well as for the States. Women need to be assisted to realise their rights and to cope with situations arising from widowhood, desertion, crime, etc.

(17) For the physically handicapped, a coordinated inter-sectoral strategy for prevention, early identification, treatment, education, training, rehabilitation and placement has to be developed. Policies and programmes should aim at the integration of the handicapped in society.

(18) There are certain areas/problems which are relatively neglected because of higher priority given to other problems and needs and also because they are often in numerical terms relatively small. Such, for instance, are problems relating to the care of the elderly divorced/separated women, etc. It would be desirable at least to promote understanding, discussion and debate on the nature of the problems and its causes and dimensions, as it may be possible to enthuse and interest voluntary effort in the field.

A B BOSE

NOTE

- 1 *Social Welfare Planning in the Context of National Development Plans*, United Nations, New York, 1970, p. 65

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

While social welfare was not unknown in India through the centuries, social work education is not indigenous in origin. It was greatly influenced by the pattern of development of social work education in the United States of America. Until the thirties, social welfare in the USA was very much concerned with the provision of personal services, first through the Charity Organisation Society and later through Public Aid. These

personal services were followed by the development of family and child welfare services. The cases handled in these family and child welfare agencies reflected problems of relationship which led to inter-relationship help-seeking rather than meeting financial need, which was the concern of public aid programmes. Casework, therefore, achieved the greatest development in family and child welfare, and medical and psychiatric social work. Because it was the first method of intervention to develop in the context of personal services to meet individual need, it was also the first to be introduced in the curricula of the schools of social work in the USA and later in India.

Work with groups began to receive attention, as a helping method, with the influx of immigrants to the USA and the setting up of Settlement Houses in immigrant and poor neighbourhoods. It was a movement that initially started in the east end of London in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. These Settlement Houses came to be known as group-serving agencies as they provided recreation, adult education, literacy, and other services to children, adolescents, adults and aged in the community. While their earlier emphasis had been on the study of social problems (such as poverty, ill-health, housing) and social reform, eventually they lost these functions and the needs of various groups became the major targets of intervention. The first curriculum in group work was established in 1923 at the Western Reserve University (now Case-Western Reserve) in Cleveland. Thus, group work emerged as a method of intervention in work with people. Later, it was greatly influenced by psychodynamic theories and, like casework, moved from tangible services to the area of human inter-relationships.

Community organisation was initially linked to the organisation of Community Councils and the Community Fund in the USA which was established in 1918 as the Community Chests and Councils of America, Inc. Their objectives were to plan, organise and sustain

the growth of private welfare Community organisation became, however, an important method of intervention in work with communities when the War on Poverty during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations required the organisation of people in deteriorated urban-neighbourhoods, especially the organisation of the black minority.

Because of the historical development of these methods of intervention in response to needs emanating from an industrial and urban dominated society, we find that casework preceded group work, and community work was the last to be incorporated in the social work curriculum in a systematic way. Problems of personal adjustment, rather than systemic change, were the focus of the services and the training imparted to social welfare manpower.

In 1937, the American Association of Schools of Social Work laid down that all social work education must be offered at the graduate level by 1 October 1939 (beginning of the academic year in the universities). Concern was felt over this decision in many quarters with regard to the need for workers, especially for the tax supported services, where the requirements were not specific in terms of a degree in social work for purposes of recruitment. As a result, the National Association of Schools of Social Administration was established in 1942, separate from the master's level membership of the American Association of Schools of Social Work, with the objective of accrediting institutions training workers at the bachelor's level. The students generally had a broad social science base and a few preliminary courses in social welfare. They were generally regarded as pre-professional programmes. This situation lasted till 1946 when the National Council of Social Work Education was established as the accrediting body for both the master's and the bachelor's level programmes as multiple accreditation by two separate associations was not favoured. These developments had considerable influence on social work education in India, as we shall see later, in relation to the urban context of social work

education, the link with the university, and the nature of the curriculum with the triad of casework, group work and community work as the major methods of intervention.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Dr Clifford Manshardt, an American Protestant missionary, who had graduated in theology from the University of Chicago, came to India in 1925 through the American Marathi Mission, a Protestant Christian organisation. This organisation decided to undertake work in slums and, with that objective, founded the Nagpada Neighbourhood House in 1926, headed by Dr Clifford Manshardt as its first Director. The agency was similar to a Settlement House in its objectives and activities. It was located in an area which had many social problems including poverty, gambling and prostitution.

Dr Manshardt mooted the idea of developing a school of social work to meet the need for trained manpower to work in Indian conditions. With financing from the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, the first school was founded in 1936 known as the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work and later renamed as the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in 1944 (hereinafter mentioned as TISS). Because it was founded by an American, it had three major characteristics imported from American experience—it required a basic bachelor's degree for admission, was for a duration of two years, and it was called a "School" much as in the American pattern. The school admitted students, once every alternate year because of the small size of the faculty which was locally recruited in order to be able to give individual guidance; and "since the profession of social work was in its infancy in India, we did not wish to turn out more graduates than might reasonably be expected to be employed on a professional basis".¹ This practice continued from 1936 to 1942, and thereafter it was discontinued.

The first library was assembled from a bibliography prepared by the University of

Chicago Library The faculty consisted of one German Jewish refugee, one Indian, with his background in education and theology, an Indian graduate of the University of Bombay with a background in sociology and an American Visiting Professor None had specific education in social work

For almost another decade, there was no other programme of social work education in the country In 1947, both Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad, and Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi, established such programmes Subsequently, several others came into existence, including Delhi in 1948, Baroda in 1950, Madras and Lucknow in 1954 and another institution in Bombay (besides the TISS) in 1955 Thus, by the end of the second decade after the first institution was established in 1936, only 7 institutions were established The sixties experienced the highest rate of growth By 1975, when the Second Review Committee for Social Work Education established by the University Grants Commission undertook a survey, there were 34 institutions for social work education (hereinafter referred to as the UGC Report).² The *Handbook on Social Work Education Facilities in India* also reported 34 institutions in 1976³ (hereinafter referred to as the Handbook)

DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM

Manshardt states that "the attempt to root training of social work in experience was the work of the Tata School from its inception"⁴ In spite of the above assertion, he observes that, in actuality, the question of which subjects were to be taught, was resolved by combining the curricula of the American schools of social work with the British pattern However, it was stated that western content was subjected to critical analysis for its applicability to India. Evidently, the method of building the curricula, based on identification of the problems that were faced in society and the tasks to be undertaken and then locating the subject matter to suit the tasks to be performed, was not utilised Rather, the

methodology followed was, as happens too often with academicians, to try to fit and adapt existing curricula to existing conditions, since our framework for selection is often the subject matter rather than the problem calling for action

The first curriculum introduced in 1936 by TISS, included the methods of social casework, administration and research Subjects related to sociology, economics, psychology and human development were offered. Subject matter on target groups included the child, the family and juvenile delinquents Medical and psychiatric information were also offered. All the courses were compulsory and no specialisations were offered

For ten years the curriculum did not change and the subjects continued to be pretty much the same. Neither group work nor community organisation had found their place in the syllabi although they were beginning to find a place in the curricula of schools in the USA.

The need to have a basic curriculum, common to all schools, was occupying the attention of the American schools in the late thirties and the forties. Since 1942, the American Association of Schools of Social Work tried to focus attention on a desirable 'Minimum Curriculum', and some agreement was arrived at which was superseded in 1944 by the 'basic eight'⁵ These courses included Public Welfare, Social Casework, Group Work, Community Organisation, Medical Information, Social Research, Psychiatry and Social Welfare Administration. The topics in the TISS syllabus were similar at that time except that the American syllabus included field and target group related information

Because of the increase in the number of Schools in USA, there was continuing preoccupation in the forties with developing a curriculum which could be recognised as the basic requirement for all professional workers. An early pioneer in this work was the School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago. Another leader in the field, the New

York School of Social Work at Columbia University, began its own curricular revision towards this end, in 1950, a half century after the establishment of these first two Schools in that country. The major objective appeared to be to remove vestiges of too early a preoccupation with agency related concerns and to widen out to profession-related concerns. Hence, the attempt was made to remove these specialisations from the syllabus.

It appears from the reading of history that training for social work emanated from the needs of agencies and, therefore, early curricula tended to be tied to such specific needs. As the profession developed, there was a growing concern with identifying and transmitting a common professional base in the first degree awarded, with the emphasis on specialisations as areas for advanced study. The well-known Hollis-Taylor report underscored the need for this change.⁶

Parallel to this academic search for a common base, later to be termed generic, the separate national organisations for social workers which had been established merged in 1955. These included the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers, Medical Social Workers, the Visiting Teachers' Association (School Social Workers), Association of Group Workers and Community Organisation, and the American Association of Social Workers. It then came to be known as the National Association of Social Workers. In a sense, the influence of specialisation by fields was thus lessened.

In 1949, Gordon R. Hamilton stated in an article in the *Social Work Journal*: "If we can agree that the older specialisations by agency setting are breaking down in the face of a broader base for social work, we shall be more prepared for the newer specialisations of advanced practice, administration, supervision, teaching and research."⁷

Commenting on the above quote, the Hollis-Taylor report states that "in implying that social work specialisations should be characterised by *functions* instead of by *agency*

settings, Hamilton exhibits a sound understanding of social work practice and keen insight concerning the essential nature of advanced professional education."⁸

By the time the American schools turned the decade of the forties, they had been influenced by the thrust to become generic. However, because of the supremacy of casework as the method of problem-solving, at that time, generic meant the use of this method across settings. Later, group work was taught in a similar manner. The combination of methods for producing a social work generalist was a development of the late sixties.

While all these developments were taking place in the USA, the curriculum of the then only school in India, TISS, remained unchanged materially until the end of the second world war. During the first decade of its existence, the pressure on the School to introduce field related courses was growing. The Government and industrial concerns wanted Labour Welfare Officers who had more specialised content in their specific field. The Report of the (Bhore) Health Survey and Development Committee (1945) recommended the setting up of social services departments in hospitals and the necessity of utilising psychiatric social workers in the treatment of mental illness. At the same time, pressure was building up from the field to provide personnel for the juvenile courts and probation officers for work with adult offenders. Hence, there was a move towards introducing the specialisations of Labour Welfare and Personnel Management, Medical and Psychiatric Social Work, and Criminology and Correctional Administration. This is parallel to the pressures on American schools in their early years to prepare personnel for specific agency related jobs.

Secondly, during the period immediately following the second world war, the influence of the American pattern on social work education here increased. Specialisations in various fields of social work were introduced with either the assistance of American experts

or deputing their faculty abroad. Thus, the foundations of social work education were laid with very close links to another culture, and its special concerns which were related to an urban and industrial society, unlike India whose problems emanated from an agrarian society with mass poverty. The problems of an agrarian society, with mass poverty, received less focus. In fact, group work and community organisation first appeared in the basic courses in 1948-49, twelve years after the introduction of casework in the curriculum.

By 1948-49, the TISS bulletin announced the first curriculum with specialisations and, interestingly, it was spread over five terms, of which the first four were to be focused on equipping "the student with the necessary scientific knowledge, professional philosophy, practical skills which enter into the effective programme of social work. Although the Institute does not foster narrow specialisation during the first four terms, it has introduced specialisation courses for those who have successfully completed the programme of work during that period. Such a programme helps students who desire to do advanced work in any particular field of social work."

These fields included Family and Child Welfare, Medical Social Work, Psychiatric Social Work, and Personnel Management and Labour Welfare.

In 1949-50, the five terms continued but the basic courses were covered in three terms and two terms were devoted to specialisations. Medical and Psychiatric Social Work were combined and Public Welfare Administration was added. This pattern was continued until 1950-51. By 1951-52, the terms were brought down to four. The first year was generic, with the specialisations in the second year, combined with some common courses.

While American Schools had begun to shift to a generic curriculum by the fifties, TISS had just established the field related specialisations. Since no other institutions existed before 1947, it was but natural that the newly established programmes after independence (1947) looked

to the pioneer institution, TISS. Hence, a majority of programmes in India have this pattern of specialisation by fields.

REVIEW OF THE PRESENT CURRICULA

The present curricula at the master's and the post-graduate diploma level show that, out of 30 institutions, 22 offer specialisations. Usually, the first year is generic, and in the second year, courses in the specialisations are offered. Field work and research are also related to the area of specialisation.

The papers in the core content generally include Man and Society, Human Behaviour, History and Philosophy of Social Work, Fields of Social Work, Social Legislation, the three methods of Casework, Group Work and Community Work, and Administration and Research. These tend to be the stereotyped subjects in the first year.

In the second year, most institutions offer the traditional specialisations. The UGC study¹⁰ showed that, of the 20 institutions with specialisations in their curriculum, 16 offered Labour Welfare/Personnel Management/Industrial Relations. Six institutions did not offer any papers in this specialisation. Community Organisation/Development was offered by 14, Family and Child Welfare by 12, Correctional Administration and Medical and Psychiatric Social Work by 10 each, Social Welfare Administration was offered by 5, Social Research and Statistics by one, and Tribal Welfare and Welfare of Backward Classes by 2. The new specialisations mentioned in the UGC study were Rural Institutions and Agriculture, Social Work with Weaker Sections, and Social Work with Special Groups.

Students' interests in specialisations are less motivated by commitment, idealism and service, and to a larger extent by job security and benefits. Hence, 47 percent of the enrolment is shown in labour welfare/personnel management/industrial relations. The least attractive jobs are those in

communities, especially rural development and tribal welfare. The emphasis tends to be more on specialisations which are remedial and rehabilitative than those which have a developmental emphasis.

There is generally no agreement on the core content that is expected to cover a specialisation. Hence, the number of papers ranges from one to nine with the predominant pattern being one to three papers. The number of specialisations offered in each institution is also, generally, very small since it is considered expensive to maintain faculty for each specialisation. A number of institutions, therefore, have only two or three specialisations, of which Personnel Management/Labour Welfare is generally one. There is, generally, only one faculty member for each specialisation.

The review of courses generally shows a stereotyped pattern with limited relevance to local needs. There is inadequate emphasis on poverty and development. The traditional role of welfare, remedial and rehabilitative, prevails. Social work methods obtain a low priority in the number of hours of teaching allocated to them, although they are expected to be the major tools of intervention in working with people. The curriculum tends to be weighted in favour of information giving rather than in developing capacities for analysis and problem solving skills expected of social workers.

There are six institutions offering a generic programme. However, there was no consensus among them as to what should constitute a generic curriculum. In the trend that was current in the USA for many years, generic referred to the teaching of a method in all the settings, but students tended to specialise by a method. This method of viewing generic content is now seriously questioned in the USA. In India, there were three major ways of viewing the term generic.

- (a) The course offers all the methods of social work which are viewed in their application to all the settings.

- (b) The course contains one paper on each of the fields of social work.

- (c) The course offers core content and, in addition, has special interest papers or electives. In only one institution, the electives offered relate to substantive areas of students' interest, social science content, or areas of role (practice, teaching, administration, research). Generally, otherwise, these special interest areas were by fields in all the other institutions offering a generic programme.

In recent years, there has been an attempt in these institutions to integrate the teaching of the methods.

Besides influences from the pioneer institution in the country, whose alumni were drawn to the newly established institutions, the mid-fifties experienced another period of influence from the USA with the establishment of the Technical Cooperation Mission (TCM). The Council on Social Work Education (USA) and the U.S. Government sponsored several American educators as consultants to Indian schools and opportunities were opened up for Indian educators to obtain degrees in social work in the USA.

The focus of the TCM was on the strengthening of the basic courses such as Human Behaviour and improving the teaching of methods through the development of case records. Field work also received emphasis. Through seminars for social work educators, sponsored under the aegis of this programme, the Association of Schools of Social Work in India was established in Baroda in 1959 as it provided opportunities for social work educators to begin to come together to share their common concerns.

Since the seventies, several institutions have undertaken a major review of their curricula and developed new courses, with a more developmental focus and emphasis on poverty. The Association of Schools of Social Work in India has also organised seminars on developmentally oriented curricula. The new courses include the Profile of Poverty,

Problems of Underdevelopment and Developmental Approaches, Social Change, Social Action, Communications (media techniques), Non-formal Education/Social Education, Population Education and Family Planning, Welfare of Weaker Sections, and social systems related courses including the economic, political and educational systems

There is a need to reorient social work education towards developing skills in the analysis of the systemic problems, and problem-solving skills which are clearly oriented towards systems and attitudinal changes of a socially exploitative and inequitable structure of society. Hence, society, social systems and social change must receive greater emphasis.

There is also a search for developing field work placements which parallel this new learning in the classroom. There is a greater emphasis on placements in communities. There is an attempt to extend work in communities around the problem for work in the institution in which the student is placed, e.g., community health for students placed in hospitals. Another attempt is to place students around a problem area rather than the agency as the focus of the student's task. The "floating" placement de-emphasises agency structural constraints. There is a need to develop skills which are not only related to the delivery of the services but to structural change. The traditional organisation of field work, in institutional structures, is not necessarily the best means for offering such experiences.

The third component of the curriculum, research, is no longer compulsory in all institutions. In some institutions, there are two streams—one for those who have aptitude and interest in becoming the producers of research and the other for those who will largely need to become intelligent consumers of research.

STATISTICAL PROFILE

There are now forty institutions for social work education in the country but detailed information is available on thirty-four existing

at the time the UGC report and the *Handbook* were under preparation. The *Handbook on Social Work Education Facilities in India* (1976), reported that 27 institutions offered a master's degree in social work and two institutions offered post-graduate diplomas, of which one institution was private and the other was awarded by a university. In the report of the Second Review Committee on Social Work Education, the number of master's programmes were reported to be 28.¹¹ In addition, there were two institutions mentioned earlier which offered the diploma. Both studies mentioned the existence of 10 institutions offering the bachelor's degree in social work, of which, 5 also offered the master's degree. Eleven institutions, in both studies, reported that they offered the Ph.D. programmes although only two of these had the M. Phil. degree. It is obvious that most of the programmes for social work education are at the master's level, similar to the pattern initially set in the country. There are less bachelor's level programmes compared to the master's or the Ph.D. Only four institutions offer a post-secondary school certificate. Hence, social work education tends to be in the realm of higher education—beyond the first degree.

A detailed statistical profile on social work education, based on a survey done by the Second Review Committee on Social Work Education of the UGC, is given in its report. Only some findings are reported here.

The pattern of affiliation showed that a majority (21) were affiliated colleges of State universities.¹² Only 9 of these institutions functioned as departments, or maintained institutions of universities, two of which were in Central universities. There were three departments of social work in deemed universities. Only one institution was private.

The geographical distribution of institutions is very uneven. Thus, while Maharashtra had 8 institutions and Tamil Nadu 6, States in the extreme north and north-east had none.¹³

As for urban-rural imbalances, these are the greatest because social work education has been at higher academic levels and is university oriented. Hence, its location is in urban, university centres. Only four institutions have some rural bias, including Gujarat Vidyapeeth at Ahmedabad, Ahmednagar College at Ahmednagar, Sriniketan at Shantiniketan and the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya at Combatore.¹⁴

In the *Handbook*, the total enrolment each year for 28 MSW programmes was reported to be 960 with an average enrolment of 34.

At the BSW level, the data showed that in 9 institutions, the total enrolment each year was 520.

There were only two institutions with M Phil degrees. The total number enrolled was 30. For doctoral programmes in the year 1975, the data reported in the *Handbook* showed that 10 had been awarded Ph D degrees that year, 6 others had submitted their thesis, and 99 were registered. The total number, who graduated in 1975, was shown to be 936 between the MSW and BSW programmes.

Enrolment statistics showed that between 1970 and 1975, there were 60 percent men and 40 percent women in the MSW programme.¹⁵

There were 284 full-time and 72 part-time faculty reported in 33 institutions in the UGC study.¹⁶ The male/female distribution in the UGC study was 71 percent males to 29 percent females. There were 19 men and 5 women principals.

The salaries of faculty varied with the nature of the affiliation. Generally, Central and deemed universities were the most favourably placed, followed by departments of State universities. The affiliated colleges, which were in the majority, were the least favourably placed.¹⁷

Demonstration projects have been organised by such institutions since 1936, when the first institution, TISS, was founded. They include community centres, family agency, foster care, adoption and school social work. Balwadis and

nutrition projects were included in community activities. These projects served the institutions for demonstration, experimentation, field training and research.¹⁸

Most of the institutions are engaged in research projects.¹⁹ However, the actual output of such research was small in the case of a large number of institutions due to the preoccupation of the faculty with field work by the students. With the setting up of the Planning, Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Division of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of India, a very important input for generating data has been made available and new opportunities have opened up for these institutions to obtain funds for undertaking research as well as developing, thereby, a means for the growth of indigenous teaching materials.

PRESENT ISSUES AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Levels of Training The earlier review shows that social work education is generally at the university level and is even higher than the first degree in most instances. The trend is to provide the first education in social work at the master's level and then go beyond it to M Phil and Ph D. The result is that many basic and pre-professional social science courses are included at the master's level, whereas, ordinarily, they cannot qualify to be at such an advanced level. There is a need to introduce bachelor degree training which would be more consonant with the types of jobs now available in most of the employing organisations. We train students at great public expense since the training comes in the sixth year after the student has left school. While the student has continued to study in the educational system, the costs are underwritten through public funds. The issue is whether much of social work education could be completed at a lower level in the educational ladder.

The second issue is whether a bachelor's degree course is pre-professional or professional. Generally, the consensus today is that the bachelor's degree should be a

professional course preparing social workers for jobs of a front-line or semi-front line nature requiring the use of professional skills

Further, the profession is also confronted with the issue of training of para-professional front-line workers who may be more programme oriented, with more narrowly defined job skills than the bachelor degree workers. The latter are likely to be more process oriented in relation to the professional skills of intervention for working around a problem area such as children or health

At present, the bulk of training of these front-line workers is carried on by agencies other than institutions for social work education. Historically, this was inevitable, as, until 1952, when Community Development was launched there were only five institutions in the country and, with the launching of massive community development programmes, many training institutions had to be developed almost instantly. Hence, the best that these institutions could do was to provide consultative service on curriculum development, and in the initial years, some of the faculty were even utilised in their training as visiting lecturers

Today, these training institutions are either managed by the government, or they are supported by a total grant from the government to voluntary organisations. The information provided in the *Handbook on Social Work Training Facilities in India* (1979)²⁰ shows that there are 27 Balsevika Training Centres run by the Indian Council for Child Welfare through grant-in-aid. Nine have been added in 1979-80. There are six Family and Child Welfare Training Centres and nine institutions for training of tribal welfare personnel. For the field of Community Development, there are 85 Gram Sevak Training Centres and 22 Gram Sevika Training Centres mostly under the administrative control of the respective State Governments and Union Territory administrations. Hence, the bulk of personnel for the vast development services in India are trained outside these

educational institutions, mostly through governmental assistance, and the curricula are designed centrally

Most of these institutions provide training to front-line workers for the rural and tribal areas. Their courses generally are short-term, normally never more than a year's duration. They are not linked to the existing academic career ladder. Hence, the training and the jobs in which they enter tend to be dead-end. Because of this factor alone, apart from the fact that they are low salaried positions, they tend to attract those who cannot find a place in the normal educational system, or whose financial status makes it necessary to obtain training with an immediate job potential. However, the end result is stagnation for those who have ability to rise both in the educational and the job ladder to exercise fully their talents and capacities. Institutions offering degree programmes in social work should review their present activity and assess their potential for developing such programmes at lower levels, but within the educational ladder such as at the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) level. It is also essential to develop the courses in such a way that there are several terminal points with job potential, thus making it possible for trainees to move from the educational system to the job and vice versa. The trainee triangle has to be inverted so that we develop a large base at the lower level, and a smaller number of trainees at higher levels (master's). Today, it is the other way around with the bachelor's degree holder in a minority.

Urban-Rural Imbalances If these institutions are to become more relevant to national needs, they will also have to consider the effects of their present location on such training. A majority are urban based institutions. Rural workers cannot be trained in urban areas. These institutions may consider the possibility of developing rural extension services through the development of a rural campus. Beginning with training for front-line workers, they could develop higher levels of training for social work.

Curricular Issues As noted before, these institutions have an urban bias, training workers for positions in urban systems—industry, health, and legal systems. They are responsive to problems arising from industrialisation and urbanisation. They follow the pattern of social work education in the west which was primarily responsive to problems created by industrialisation. In the west, such content is realistic when 80 percent live in urban conglomerations and only 20 percent live in rural communities. It is the other way round in the developing countries. Whereas social problems arising from industrialisation affect only a few in our societies, the major problems faced are the end products of social structural inequities and the resulting polarisation of incomes, goods and services by which the majority find themselves outside the mainstream of life. Therefore, the curriculum needs to relate to an analysis of these realities and problem solving in relation to them—the twin problems of poverty and population and their concomitants, unemployment/under-employment, ill-health, illiteracy, exploitation, the need for redistributive justice, and reduction in social polarities.

There is also need for developing field work placements which parallel this new learning in the classroom. Skills have to be developed which are related not only to the delivery of services but to structural changes. The dilemma faced is that such field work, to be effective, would not be possible in the present welfare structures, and, in addition, would most likely jeopardise the institutional base of the institution which derives its sanction from bureaucratic university/governmental structures.

Specialist Versus Generalist Debate Most institutions offer a specialist programme in spite of research evidence to the contrary which shows that with the prevailing job market in India, students do not necessarily take a job in the area of their specialisation; they do not necessarily stay with their initial interest which is likely to change and move in other directions with maturity, situational

factors, and development of new interests or discovery of potential hitherto unrecognised. This means that we train a person for a field and, in turn, make him dysfunctional if he is forced to take a job in a field other than his own.

Secondly, we believe we offer a specialisation, but in the absence of any consensus on the core content of any specialisation, we actually fail in this objective. Thus, we find that most institutions offer anywhere from one to three papers and only one offers five, and one nine papers. For a specialisation to have meaning, it should include philosophy and history of development of the special field, major theories in the field, legislation, administration, the relevant methods of intervention, a review of existing research and the gaps in knowledge identified.

The Place of Labour Welfare/Personnel Management/Industrial Relations: This specialisation may truly be said to be indigenous. It arose in India due to the historical factor that the beginnings of industrialisation coincided with the establishment of social work education in industrial centres, and the emerging problems faced by industry with the predominantly rural labour drawn to the cities. The employment of labour welfare officers was required by the Factories Act of 1948. However, with the growth of powerful trade unions, and the developing field of industrial relations and personnel management, which is not necessarily located in institutions for social work education, its relevance and priority need to be re-examined. Organised industrial labour is said to be in the top 10 percent of income earners in the country. While social work can continue to have significant inputs in this field, it is no longer exclusively of concern to social work education, since other types of institutions have entered the field of management and industrial relations. There is, on the other hand, a greater and more urgent need to work for unorganised labour. This is a field which requires recognition and some priority in social work education.

On the other hand, even the institutions for social work education, which do not have specialisation, offer courses on industry and the industrial worker, because such workers are the client system in many settings in which social workers operate, e.g. urban slums and hospitals. They provide field work in industry in those areas which are considered to be the legitimate responsibilities of social workers such as personal and family problems of the employees (e.g. problems of absenteeism, alcoholism, indebtedness); work in the housing colonies/slum neighbourhoods with concentrations of industrial workers; personnel development, and organisation of welfare services beyond the statutory requirements. A further development is in the adoption of rural areas and urban slums by industrial and business houses as a part of their social responsibility. This is an expanding field of employment and concerns itself with those who have not benefited from development, provided that it does not become a new form of exploitation by such industrial and business houses.

Indigenisation of Literature Indigenisation of literature can only follow indigenisation of our practice. As long as our approaches remain western in their orientation—defining problems and seeking solutions with the analytical and problem solving tools developed elsewhere—we cannot hope to indigenise our knowledge, skills or even values. One is linked to the other to a great extent. A great deal of work needs to be done in this area. Experienced faculty need to be taken from their regular tasks, periodically, for producing such materials. Both the UGC and the Government can play a major role in underpinning the costs.

Accreditation and Organisation of Social Work Education There is a tendency to set up institutions for social work education without proper planning and facilities at great cost to standards. Ultimately, the graduates from such institutions have difficulty in obtaining employment. Such institutions start without

identifying the level at which the training is required and the type of syllabus which will meet the local needs for manpower.

In such a situation, there is need to establish an adequate accrediting organisation at the national level. The Association of Schools of Social Work in India, established in 1959, has very little authority since it consists of voluntary membership of institutions. A plan for the establishment of a National Council for Social Work Education, a statutory body, has been suggested in the UGC report.²¹

The second UGC Review Committee has identified the minimum standards required and these should become operative. There is also a need expressed in the same report for a planned development of such institutions in relation to regional needs, development of curricula which reflect local needs, and adequate funding through more responsible participation of both the Central and State Governments in the preparation of trained manpower. It is also necessary to have a systematic development of field service projects as laboratories of such institutions, similar to a laboratory in a science college, a hospital for a medical college, a land grant to an agricultural college, or a workshop for an engineering college. Unless both the UGC and the Government are more involved in the planned development of such institutions, manpower training for social welfare and development is likely to suffer.

Training, a Requirement for Jobs Lastly, it is essential to make training a requirement for jobs in this sector. Hitherto, only jobs in Labour Welfare have a statutory base. As long as social welfare and development continue to be seen as being synonymous with charity, philanthropy and reform, there is likely to be little recognition of the need for social work education and training. Recognition is lacking that there is a burgeoning of knowledge in regard to development of specific skills and strategies for intervention, and values and attitudes which may differ from the older traditional ones with their roots in charity and

philanthropy There is need to reconcile the essential quality of humanism of the profession with the quality of rationalism and a scientific approach

CONCLUSION

Social work education in India has now passed four decades The profession is faced with many crucial issues related to organisation, structure and curriculum The Second Review Committee for Social Work Education has placed before the educators a document calling for far-sweeping changes The outcome in the next few decades will depend on the seriousness of purpose with which its recommendations are implemented by the relevant bodies—the institutions for social work education, the universities, the University Grants Commission and especially its Panel on Social Work Education, the Association of Schools of Social Work in India, the Departments of Social Welfare at the Centre and in the States and Union Territories, and the Planning Commission All these bodies are crucially involved in the organisation and delivery of education for the profession of social work

ARMAITY S DESAI

NOTES

- 1 Clifford Manshardt, *Pioneering on Social Frontiers in India*, Lalvani Publishing House, Bombay, 1967, p 85
- 2 "A Review of Social Work Education in India Retrospect and Prospect", Report of the Second Review Committee (mimeographad) University Grants Commission, New Delhi, 1980
- 3 *Handbook on Social Work Education Facilities in India*, Government of India, Department of Social Welfare, New Delhi, 1976
- 4 Manshardt, *op cit*, p 87
- 5 Ernest V Holis and Alice L Taylor, *Social Work Education in the United States*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1951, p 47
- 6 *Ibid*, pp 237-38
- 7 *Ibid*, quotation, p 250

- 8 *Ibid*
- 9 *Bulletin*, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, 1948-49, p 10
- 10 University Grants Commission, *op cit*, p 150
- 11 *Ibid*, p 20
- 12 *Ibid*, p 21
- 13 *Ibid*, p 22
- 14 *Ibid*, p 22
- 15 *Ibid*, p 250
- 16 *Ibid*, p 27
- 17 *Ibid*, p 122
- 18 *Ibid*, p 32
- 19 *Ibid*, p 29
- 20 *Handbook on Social Work Training Facilities in India*, Government of India, Department of Social Welfare, New Delhi, 1979
- 21 University Grants Commission, *op cit*, p 138

DEVELOPMENT OF VOLUNTARY ACTION

Social welfare has its origin in charity, philanthropy and poor relief Presently it covers a very wide and broad spectrum of human activities The term, however, still remains unsatisfactorily defined The common agreement on the term is that it denotes services meant to cater to the special needs of persons (and groups) who by reason of some handicap—social, economic, physical or mental—are unable to avail themselves of or are traditionally denied the amenities, facilities and services provided by the community In this sense, welfare services are meant to benefit the weaker, dependent or underprivileged sections of the population The beneficiaries of these services may be physically handicapped persons, such as the blind, the deaf or the crippled, socially dependent individuals, like the orphan, the widow or the destitute; mentally retarded persons; economically underprivileged groups such as

those living in slum areas, and women handicapped by restrictive social traditions or practices

In the Indian situation, for a long time, communities based on caste had welfare programmes for their own benefit. Members of the caste were expected to voluntarily contribute to the caste fund either in cash, kind or labour and help the other members at times of need. Some of the castes had their own trusts and educational foundations which gave grants, loans or other facilities to members of the caste. The physically handicapped and other disabled individuals also became the charge of the community and it was the caste which took care of these individuals. In times of crisis and calamities the village community pooled its resources to help those in distress and on occasions this cut across caste and religious boundaries. Cases also of individual acts of charity were not infrequent.

Various religious communities too organised themselves to help and protect their members. The best form of organisation based on the religious affiliation is found among the Parsis who have many charities and trusts which provide services for the normal as well as the underprivileged sections of the Parsi community.

CONCEPT

Voluntary action is autonomous and flexible. It is initiated by a group of like-minded people to change and transform the socio-economic life of the people, specially the weaker sections, based on social justice and not merely for charity or relief. It is often used synonymously with voluntary effort, even though voluntary action and voluntary effort are not the same. While the former calls for planning and involvement of a group to deal with a problem the latter may not entail such steps.

The essential feature of voluntary action is that it is problem-oriented. It is initiated not only to solve the problem but to prevent the

occurrence of the problem. It calls for understanding and identification of the problem, fixing up of priorities, formulation of programmes taking into consideration the problem and available resources and, finally, carrying out the programmes by a group of individuals working independently without external control or coercion. Voluntary action ultimately aims at creating a situation conducive to the development of potentialities in individuals, groups and communities to find solutions to their problems, and ways and means to handling these to realise their ultimate goal.

Voluntary action may include a wide range of activities like construction and maintenance of educational institutions, hospitals, inns, roads, etc., providing jobs to the needy through various economic development programmes; and community services. It also includes organised social action for social justice and end of exploitation—social, economic and political. In fact, the basic task of any voluntary action group is to develop Man and not just organise services for him.

The group initiating the action may work informally or formally. When the group works formally, it comes to be known as a voluntary organisation. The characteristics of a voluntary organisation are

(i) It is registered under an appropriate Act to give a corporate status to a group of individuals, so that they get a legal personality, and an individual's liability may give place to group liability. The Acts under which the organisations can be registered, depending on the nature and scope of activities, are the Societies Registration Act, 1860, the Indian Trusts Act, 1882, the Cooperative Societies Act, 1904, and the Joint Stock Companies Act, 1956.

(ii) It has an administrative structure, and a duly constituted managing/executive committee.

(iii) It has definite aims and objects, and programmes in fulfilment of these.

(iv) It is an organisation initiated and governed by its own members on democratic principles without any external control

The basic commitment of the people engaged in voluntary action is to have planned change by organising voluntary organisations for the development of economic and social life of the concerned community. Some of the volunteers may work for the total development of the community while some may work specifically for the benefit of the weaker sections. Volunteers work with local people to promote people's involvement and enlist their participation in development and welfare programmes. The fundamental objective is to develop people's capacities and resources to enable them to take over and manage problems and tasks by establishing their own voluntary action groups and institutions.

The basic tenet of an external voluntary action group is to act as a catalyst and pull out of the community or the area of work by developing people's institutions and organisation as early as possible.

HISTORY

The history of development of social welfare in India prior to independence is primarily the history of voluntary action. Before the nineteenth century, charity on a large scale on voluntary basis outside the religious channels took place mainly during emergencies such as famines and floods. The rich and the ruling were enjoined to support the indigent. A system of *madhukari* was prevalent in some parts of the country. Under this custom, poor Brahmin boys supported themselves during their studentship by taking meals once a week by turn in one of the households with which they had prior arrangements. There used to be a list of households who had volunteered to provide such a service to these students. The Chinese traveller Hsuan-tsang observed in the seventh century that the Indian people were always in the habit of planting trees on the wayside to give shade to travellers. They voluntarily came together to dig tanks and

wells for drinking water for the community. It seems that the community had its own indigenous organisations to provide such services on a collective basis.

In the medieval period in India, there was a system of *adheenams* prevalent in the southern part of the country. In this system, the community organised and established centres of learning and research where free boarding and lodging were provided to students. A number of libraries were set up around such institutions of learning. Communities raised funds through their own organisations to distribute grants to hospitals, schools, colleges and poor homes. The practice during the medieval period of constructing *Dharmshalas* (rest houses) for travellers still continues. Thus in medieval India, the problems of indigency were mitigated largely by mutuality of obligations according to the norms then prevalent. The latter part of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century saw the outbreak of severe famines which swept across the countryside. These resulted in deaths of large numbers of people from starvation. The kings responded with royal charity doles. But there were no systematic efforts to meet the problem on a scientific basis. Further, throughout the eighteenth century, the problems of individuals and groups were met by individual philanthropy and religious charity. The concept of rehabilitating the poor and the handicapped was absent.

Voluntary action in social welfare in India in earlier times had, however, a rather restrictive and sectarian bias based on caste and religion.

Voluntary action got stimulus in the nineteenth century. It manifested itself in three directions, namely (i) religious reforms, (ii) social reforms, and (iii) voluntary social work. Raja Ram Mohan Roy had considerable influence not only in Bengal but also elsewhere in the field of social reform. His experiment of organising vigilance committees of volunteers to fight *sati* (1815-1820) yielded magnificent results. His voluntarism enveloped a variety of

interests such as improving conditions of widows, education of women, removal of caste restrictions, etc. The Atmiya Society (1815), the Unitarian Committee (1822), and the Brahmo Samaj (1826) were some of his creations in the eastern part of the county. Dadabhai Naoroji in the western part, specially Bombay and Maharashtra, played a pioneering role from 1849 to 1865 in the furtherance of education of girls, religious reforms and women's education. During the same period, primary schools in Marathawada were started on a voluntary basis, and several teachers gave their services free as such bodies lacked funds. During the latter part of the century, leaders of public opinion, influenced by western liberal thought but retaining at the same time their strength of conviction in India's ancient culture and thought, organised voluntary movements which had a powerful impact in different parts of India. Such movements were Arya Samaj (1875), Ramakrishna Mission (1897), Theosophical Movement (1893) and Anjuman-Himayat-I-Islam (1898). The argument of the leaders of these movements was that all religions were fundamentally right, but the shedding of extraneous impurities was required. These were of the nature of protestant movements against the then existing state of affairs.¹

Christian missionaries did pioneering work in all fields of welfare whether it was the setting up of orphanages or institutes for the handicapped and the old and the infirm. For instance, upto 1895, only Christian missionaries had set up orphanages. Later, philanthropic groups and other secular organisations also shared some responsibilities in this field. However, a large part of the appeal was denominational.

In the early years of the twentieth century, religious fervour gave way to rationalistic principles. The birth of the Servants of India Society in 1905 laid the foundation of secular voluntary action in India. A few years later, Mahatma Gandhi, with his high ideals and practical approach, inspired hundreds of sincere and conscientious workers to follow in

his footsteps with a spirit of dedication. He provided a large number of constructive social welfare programmes, designed to remove some of the evils that had crept into society. He was against untouchability and set up the Harijan Sevak Sangh in 1932 to improve the lot of *Harijans*.²

Voluntary action got a big boost in the early twentieth century. Actions which had begun on an informal basis received formalised structure and got organised through registered bodies. The sponsorships or the organisations engaged in voluntary action also underwent significant changes. A number of non-religious bodies started taking interest in the field of welfare. They attempted to change and transform the socio-economic life of the people. They laid greater emphasis on organising the people either to adjust with the situation or to change the situation. They did not rule out conflict or confrontation with the powers that be to get social justice for the poor by peaceful and non-violent means.

The formalisation of voluntary action may be traced to several circumstances: social awareness on the part of national leaders and absence of welfare services for the deserving and the needy, rehabilitation of refugees from Pakistan after the partition of the country, breakdown of traditional institutions such as the joint family and the village community which had provided basic security; spread of education, rising expectations; changes in aspirations of the weaker sections, specially women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and promotional efforts of the government. There was, however, a decline in the number of voluntary action groups that had been prominent in the earlier period.

Of the various forms of activity in the field of social welfare, the earliest were the welfare of women, children, the infirm and the destitute. This trend still continues.

NATURE AND EXTENT

Precise figures about the nature and extent of voluntary action are not available. It is

estimated that after independence about 10,000 agencies have been established throughout the length and breadth of the country³. Besides, there are a number of voluntary action groups which have been promoted and developed by different ministries, such as *Mahila Mandals*, youth clubs, cooperative societies, etc.

People's contribution has been an integral part of rural development programmes in India, but assessment of the extent of voluntary action is difficult. It is estimated that the extent of people's contribution declined due to the faulty policies of grant-in aid of the government and the shift in emphasis from ameliorative to development programmes.

Voluntary action has not grown uniformly over the years. For instance, organisations initiating voluntary action have multiplied rapidly after independence in 1947 with the introduction of development planning in 1951. A study of the growth of voluntary organisations in the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan shows that 80 percent of the organisations have come into existence after 1947. Geographically, the growth of the agencies has not been uniform. The States of Maharashtra, Bengal, Gujarat and Kerala lead in terms of total numbers⁴.

Directories compiled by the Central Social Welfare Board for the various States tell a similar story about voluntary action in the field of social welfare. The listed agencies are those which responded to the schedules sent by the Central Social Welfare Board⁵. The number of voluntary organisations in the different States as recorded are Kerala 750, Gujarat 600, Tamil Nadu 500, Uttar Pradesh 450, Assam 428, Punjab 189, Manipur 179, Delhi 147, Bihar 108, Pondicherry 100, Tripura 89, Haryana 73, and Goa, Daman and Diu 73.

The all-India directories⁶ on welfare services for the blind and deaf give some idea about voluntary action in the field of the physically handicapped. There were 87 voluntary organisations actively engaged in work for the blind and there were 68 for the deaf. Out of 87

blind welfare agencies, 63 agencies got financial assistance from the government while others managed on their own. In respect of the deaf, 14 agencies raised funds entirely from the public.

If the distribution is grouped by region, the western region accounts for about one-third of the total number of agencies, next is the eastern region. The reasons for such a trend are probably that action for social reform and the movement for independence were both better developed in these parts of the country. The movements and their leaders exposed people to liberal rational thought and instilled in them a desire to organise welfare services and programmes for the upliftment and betterment of the suffering masses. The uneven distribution has continued even after independence. Concentration of voluntary action has taken place in the developed districts at the cost and neglect of under-developed and poor districts. The most important reason for such a skewed distribution of voluntary action is availability of infrastructure facilities and other resources in the developed regions.

The size of the State or its population has no relationship to the growth and extent of voluntary action. For example, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have large populations but a rather weak base of voluntary action and voluntary organisations. Similarly, in the north-eastern states and several other states of the country, only a few voluntary organisations can be found. Difference in literacy levels combined with socio-political situations have greatly contributed to this uneven growth. The State capitals and metropolitan cities have attracted more voluntary organisations than other towns or the rural areas, thus giving an urban bias to services rendered by voluntary organisations. Accessibility to centres of power and ability of the leaders to obtain men, material and resources are mainly responsible for having voluntary organisations in urban areas. There is also a differential rate of growth within the same State in different districts.

Moreover, there are marked variations in the growth of different fields of social welfare

Very few voluntary action groups and voluntary organisations are active where they are needed most—in tribal and hilly areas and in the villages. There are, however, some exceptions as, for instance, Bharatiya Adimjati Sewak Sangh founded by Thakkar Bappa in 1948 for work in tribal areas.

Grants-in-aid given by the Central Social Welfare Board and the Ministry of Social Welfare of the Government of India and by the States can be only a partial index of the volume of voluntary action in India. A large number of voluntary organisations neither seek nor receive grants-in-aid and raise funds on their own. As grants are not given on cent percent basis, voluntary organisations have to find the remaining amount through local sources by enlisting voluntary contributions or raising funds through various campaigns.

The Prime Minister's National Relief Fund is an important source of support for voluntary action as amounts contributed to this fund are utilised to provide relief to people affected by natural calamities, such as earthquakes, floods, cyclones, droughts, famines and fires.

The *Bhoodan* movement of Acharya Vinoba Bhave was a major movement for voluntary action. The land donated to it by 1957 amounted to 42 lakhs of acres. By 1969, 1,40,020 villages were declared for *Gramdan*. Vinoba Bhave has widened the concept of *dan* (gift) and created other forms of it. These include *Shramdan* (gift of labour), *Sampattidan* (gift of money, income or wealth), *Buddhidan* (dedication of mental abilities to the realization of *Sarvodaya* ideals) and *Jeevandana* (dedication of one's life to the cause). In addition, in 1957 a *Shanti Sena* (Peace Army) was launched for all those who pledge themselves to work for truth and non-violence. Some indication of the size of the movement may be gauged from the number of workers involved in it. In 1964, *Sarva Seva Sangh* quoted the figure of 8,621 *Lok Sevak*s (servants of the people) who had signed a

pledge to serve humanity without recognizing differences of caste, class and creed, and to remain free from association with any kind of party and power politics.⁷

A number of examples of voluntary action can be cited throughout the country whereby people attempted to solve their problems on their own rather than depending on the government. These have taken various forms such as construction of roads, wells, tanks, schools, medical facilities and provision of relief to the needy.

The National Social Service Scheme started in 1969 has provided a volunteer force of young students to work for the amelioration and development of weaker sections of society. This number has now reached about 3 lakhs; and it is hoped that the scheme will be able to involve actively 10 percent of the entire student force enrolled in the universities. The Nehru Yuvak Kendras established at district headquarters other than metropolitan areas provide valuable opportunities to rural youth in the age group of 15 to 25 years to participate in creative activities and community services such as eradication of illiteracy, health education, sanitation programmes and land reforms.

Chipco Andolan (embracing trees) in Tehri Garhwal of Uttar Pradesh, *Mitti Bachao Abhiyan* in Hoshangabad in Madhya Pradesh and *Bhoomi Andolan* in Bodhi Gaya of Bihar are some recent examples of voluntary action. The people are organised through these resistance movements to help them secure social justice and protect their environment and interests.

Voluntary action in the area of legal aid has been systematically organised by Anand Niketan Ashram of Vadodra district of Gujarat. In the year 1978-79, the scheme handled 259 legal cases involving various type of disputes. It rendered advice and guidance in about 5,000 cases. 45 meetings were held in villages to give primary information about legal rights and obligations flowing from land reforms and debt-relief legislations. It was

successful in getting orders abolishing rural debts of tribals to the tune of Rs 56,390⁸

Voluntary action received great encouragement in the field of women and child welfare as people responded enthusiastically and generously to the call to donate funds for the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust established in 1945. The target was Rs 75 lakhs, but the collection had reached Rs 120 crores by December 1945⁹. There has been good public response to appeals to commemorate the memory of Gandhi and other national leaders and public figures through a variety of projects.

Comprehensive figures regarding the annual quantum of foreign funding in support of voluntary action in the country are not available. A conservative annual figure arrived at by aggregating the individual allocations for India of 15 donor agencies during the years 1976-77 and 1977-78 is Rs 40 crores.

This estimate does not include agencies abroad which give directly to projects in India without channelling the money through a funding agency. In the case of the Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE) more than 50 percent of its annual world-wide contribution is allocated to this country. In the case of Evangelische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe (EZE), the Indian share is nearly 30 percent. Oxford Famine Relief Committee (OXFAM), Community Aid Abroad (CAA), Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), and Christian Children's Fund (CCF) all list India as the largest single recipient of their funds. If relief allocations were included, the annual amount spent would register a sharp increase in certain years. Foreign funding of voluntary work in India continues to increase. Some donor agencies feel that voluntary organisations that they support would like to use them as a crutch, a tendency which they would like to resist. Community fund raising efforts in India have scarcely begun to gather momentum, and have a very long way to go before they can begin to sustain voluntary

effort on the scale that foreign donors now do¹⁰.

Professional social workers with the help of their two national bodies, namely, the Indian Association of Trained Social Workers, and the Association of Schools of Social Work, have made some contribution in the field of voluntary action. Both these associations have sent teams of workers and teachers to administer relief among drought stricken people in Bihar (1966-67) and among refugees from Bangladesh (1971-72). The Schools of Social Work have participated in relief programmes to give succour and help to people affected by natural calamities from time to time in their respective regions.

The participation of professional social workers as a body in voluntary action has been marginal. In a few cases, however, pioneering work has been done, as for instances in the founding of *Sanjivani* in 1976 by a Delhi group of social workers to prevent suicides and provide counselling services to mentally sick people round-the-clock.

Rotary and Lions Clubs have done welfare work through its members by giving funds for a number of welfare projects and grants to institutions.

THE WORKERS

Not many published research studies in the field of voluntary action are available. A study of voluntary social welfare in India by Chowdhary is based on data collected from 6,000 voluntary agencies, 600 *Mahila Mandals* and 66 national organisations¹¹. The basic objective of the study was to determine the concept, scope, extent and forms of voluntary effort and its advantages. Lalitha made a study of voluntary work in India which covered about 400 agencies and 856 volunteers in nine cities. Since a majority of voluntary welfare agencies are clustered in the metropolitan cities, the study sample has been drawn mainly from Delhi, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Madras, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Patna and Amritsar¹². A third study is on voluntary

organisations in rural development by Mukherjee which covered 1,850 organisations and has done an indepth study of 360 organisations.¹³

The findings of these studies show that a significant change has taken place in the structure of voluntary action. In earlier times most of the workers were unpaid, but now they are gradually being replaced by professional and paid workers. For the full time given to voluntary work, the workers have to earn a living to maintain themselves and their families. The work, too, demands sustained attention of qualified personnel.

Workers in voluntary agencies in many cases function as multipurpose functionaries largely due to inadequate personnel and material resources. Consequently, they are often found doing work unrelated to their educational and professional competence.

Recruitment and selection of workers is done through informal channels, personal contacts, camps or work projects and advertisements. Of the different methods, recruitment through advertisements plays the least part in getting volunteers. The second and third of the studies mentioned above confirm that a high proportion of workers have come through personal contacts of the personnel already involved in the agencies in one capacity or another. One of the interesting findings of the second study was that one-fifth of the professionally qualified workers became volunteers on their own initiative by contacting the agencies with an open offer of their services. This had been done to gain experience to be able to qualify for a paid job. Some give time to social work after attending some other full-time-work. Professionally qualified and married women who had ample leisure time willingly came forward to gainfully and fruitfully use their talent and time.

Despite the preference for qualified and trained workers, there is a great variation in regard to educational qualifications of workers. These range from simple literacy to high professional training. Except for a few

regional and national organisations, an overwhelming number of agencies have not been able to attract experienced and qualified personnel due to modest scales of salaries and paucity of funds. In addition to educational qualifications, emphasis is laid on personal qualities, dedication, and aptitude for work with the down-trodden people. Altruism (desire to be helpful to others), personal interest (seeking personal benefit such as experience, recognition, knowledge and prestige), and sociability (meeting and knowing people), philanthropic considerations, social responsibility, commitment to certain values, etc., are the factors which motivate people to take to voluntary action.

The first study comments that while increasing use of voluntary workers had helped in economising expenditure on the staff of the agencies, yet it has been an impediment in the proper recruitment of personnel needed for the agencies.

The field of voluntary action is expected to attract both men and women. According to the third study, a majority of the workers in voluntary organisations are men whereas findings of the second study indicate that volunteers, specially in women welfare agencies, are mostly women. But the same study states that in the field of community welfare and backward class welfare men predominate. Workers in many cases do not belong to the regions where they work. More than 50 percent are drawn from urban areas and most of them belong to the middle class. A majority (70 percent) according to the second study belong to the age group of 25-54 years, and to the age group 30-35 years according to the third study.

The leadership, with some exception, is concentrated in the hands of elderly persons. Their style of functioning exhibits a combination of authoritarian and democratic leadership. The younger persons who have just been elevated to the position of leadership are found to be more democratic than their older colleagues.

There is a tendency towards monopolisation and interlocking of leadership at the top level of voluntary action groups and organisations. The studies have found that the same person is President in one organisation, Secretary in another, Treasurer in the third and a member of the executive committee in the fourth. This interlocking of leadership can be advantageous in formulating coordinated policies, programmes and activities, facilitating exchange of technical knowhow and experience, and mobilising people for a common goal and task. The greatest disadvantage of such leadership is that fresh blood is not allowed to flow into the organisations and leadership becomes routinised and rigid. It also prevents the growth of a second line of leadership. Leaders in most of the groups and organisations would like to perpetuate themselves rather than allow the second rank leadership to grow. They have been found to occupy positions of importance for more than 20 to 25 years in an agency. The continuation of elected or nominated members for very long tenures in any group or agency makes them so powerful that they prevent democratic practices.

In many organisations there is little incentive or recognition of front-line workers. Leaders do not care to properly delegate the authority or delineate work responsibilities amongst different volunteers. This has adversely affected the growth of voluntary action and voluntary agencies. Volunteers may also have certain shortcomings as they may not take their work responsibilities seriously. It is essential to have trained, reliable, disciplined and responsible volunteers.

PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

With the advent of independence, significant changes have taken place in social welfare programmes and activities. There was undue emphasis in the earlier period on institutionalisation as the most effective method to solve the problems of physically and socially handicapped. This approach of having

specialised institutions for particular groups of clients is no longer encouraged. For instance, the services provided for the sighted children are integrated with the blind, instead of providing separate services for the latter. This trend gives a healthy social environment for the growth, development and socialisation of the handicapped. In exceptional cases, institutional care may be provided.

The most healthy development that has taken place in recent years is that ad hocism has been replaced by systematic rehabilitative programmes. The emphasis has also shifted from the curative to the preventive side. Stress is laid on research and survey to study social problems, methods and techniques of rendering services with certain minimum standards, and giving a legal base to a host of social welfare services to be provided or assisted by the State through legislation.

Taking into consideration these trends, voluntary action in the field of social welfare has tried to organise the following programmes and activities for women, children, the aged and the infirm, and physically, mentally and socially handicapped sections of the population. The emphasis in these programmes is on making the beneficiaries self-reliant. The programmes listed below are indicative and not exhaustive.

Target Groups	Programmes
(1) Women	Services for deserted, and destitute women, hostels for low income group working women, socio-economic programmes to raise and supplement the family incomes, condensed courses of education and vocational training for adult women, functional literacy, <i>Mahila Mandals</i> , legal aid
(2) Children	Integrated services for pre-school children, orphanages and foundling homes, short-stay homes, foster care

services; adoption services; creches; *Balwadis*; sponsorship programmes, cultural and recreational centres and libraries, school health services, vocational training, campaigns for enactment of suitable legislation and preventing exploitation of children, counselling services, publication of literature and dissemination of information.

- (3) Handicapped Preventive services, services for early detection, treatment, restoration, education, training, placement and rehabilitation of the blind, the deaf, the mentally retarded and the orthopaedically handicapped, vocational training centres; counselling services
- (4) Old and Infirm Old age homes, domiciliary services, health and medical check-up, old age assistance; counselling services

The distinctive feature of voluntary action is its emphasis on active involvement and participation of people in the programmes from the stage of planning to implementation and evaluation. Participation in the broadest sense helps to sensitise people and thus to increase the receptivity and ability of people to respond to programmes. Participation is essentially a political act and the ideological content of any process of participation cannot be ignored. In any programme which includes participation as one of the basic objectives, it is important to ask who participates and on what terms. The process of participation consists of five basic concepts: (a) critical faculty, (b) participation, (c) organisation, (d) solidarity, and (e) articulation. The process of participative education, therefore, is directed towards creating and nurturing the above five concepts within a group, which should result in

a state of autonomy or independence on the part of the group¹⁴

FACTORS DETERMINING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(i) *Development of Need Based Programmes.* People have different needs and priorities. The participation of people will depend to what extent the programmes are able to meet their physical, social, economic and/or psychological needs. It is desirable to find the felt needs of the people to initiate the programme.

(ii) *Workers:* People get involved because either the cause is dear to them or they derive inspiration from the workers. The worker's knowledge, understanding of the people and problems, attitude, motivation, training skills, and ability to communicate are the important factors in involving and mobilising people for a particular goal or a task. The worker must have critical ability, and a general political awareness and sensitivity. His functions over a period of time should range from one of direct intervention in the work of groups to one of indirect support. The role of the worker is to direct and guide the educational process and, importantly, to help organise the functioning of the groups.

(iii) *Leadership* This is another crucial factor which can promote or discourage people's participation. Democratic leaders can promote greater participation by involving the people in the decision making process of the organisation.

(iv) *Communication* Effective communication is an essential ingredient for people's participation. The communication should be precise, simple, specific and in a language which people can easily understand. Folk songs, folk dances and folk drama can be effectively used to communicate with people. Emphasis is on articulation and powers of observation and interpretation of the worker to be able to communicate and carry conviction with people.

(v) *Respect* Respect for the individual, the group, the community and establishment of harmonious relationships with people based on mutual trust, free from any implication of charity, patronage or dependence will greatly enhance people's participation

FACTORS IMPEDING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There are many problems which have hindered people's participation in programmes. Most people take an active interest for personal gain, but when it comes to voluntary action in the interest of public welfare they are passive. Their apathy paves the way for exploitation by vested interests. Some of the factors responsible for such a state of affairs are (i) general backwardness of the people, (ii) lack of preparation of the people as responsible citizens, (iii) absence of an adequate number of dedicated workers, (iv) over-emphasis on targets and time bound programmes, (v) political interference and vested interests, (vi) easy availability of funds without proper planning and assessment of felt needs and safeguards for the community, (vii) distrust of agencies and workers who do not have a base in the community and are unable to win its support, and (viii) lack of decentralisation which could give a feeling of being partners in development rather than development being thrust from above.

METHODS

Different methods have been used to involve and mobilise people in voluntary action. These include community organisation, social action, extension, education, and training. The workers or organisations may use one or more of these methods. The principal formal methods to secure local participation are to hold regular meetings with the people and to give as wide a representation to them in the organisational structure of the voluntary action group or agency as possible. Small group meetings and discussions are also found useful in mobilisation and involvement of people.

More important than the formal methods are a variety of informal methods that are utilised by workers. Examples of such methods are contacting people through adult education programmes, informal meetings with the local people wherein, along with general matters, discussion about the problems and programmes of the organisation are also held, arousing the interest of and motivating young people who are expected to work as equal partners.

The most important method of enlisting people's participation is to keep the machinery of organisation at the doorstep of the people so that it is readily available to them. Use of different methods depends on the objectives and programmes of the organisations, time, situation, the phase, the stage, and the type of worker. Usually, at the formulation stage, methods which are given importance are contacting individuals, groups or community, holding meetings and discussions, using audio-visuals, etc., whereas at the implementation stage, formation of committees becomes necessary.

ROLE OF VOLUNTARY ACTION

Voluntary action in the field of social welfare has all along existed as a catalyst for generating new ideas and pioneering innovative social welfare activities and services. It was there not merely to fill the gaps that existed in some areas in which government could not enter. Voluntary action helped to initiate some bold and new experiments, methods and approaches for organising people to fight the situation rather than remain passive and docile observers. The weaker sections of the people with their organised strength have not only been able to redress their grievances but also to participate actively in the mainstream of society. The services that these organisations provided were frequently forerunners of governmental efforts.

Voluntary action has been largely experimental in nature. Programmes which are new, innovative and pioneering in nature have

been taken up; methods and techniques of successful action developed, and knowledge and experience made available to the people concerned. Voluntary action has played an effective role in dissemination of information, identification of needs in a changing society, creation of public opinion in favour of progressively tackling social problems, experimentation in new techniques to bring about changes in people's attitudes and values, and organisation of programmes for the needy.

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOVERNMENT

Voluntary action is supplementing government efforts and programmes in the social welfare field instead of competing with it. There has been at times a feeling that some types of voluntary action are of the nature of confrontation or conflict with existing policies and programmes. However, in most instances these have been motivated with a desire to gain social justice for the deprived and disadvantaged groups in society. There has been a growing awareness that voluntary action can be much more effective and successful by establishing better working relationships with the government. The government has also recognized the value and importance of voluntary action and has endeavoured to support and strengthen such efforts in different ways. The steps taken by the government in this direction include: setting up of the Central Social Welfare Board as early as 1953 to develop and support technically and financially voluntary effort in the country, specially in relation to the welfare of women and children; implementing a nation-wide large-scale grants-in-aid programme for supplementing, assisting and strengthening, rather than substituting or replacing voluntary endeavour; regulating social welfare services and institutions organised by voluntary agencies through licensing of welfare institutions; ensuring minimum standards of services; preventing exploitation of staff and people; helping in the organisation of training programmes to prepare a cadre of paid and voluntary workers; providing a forum for

exchange of ideas and sharing of experience to evolve and develop common strategies for action.

Voluntary action itself stands at the crossroads. The nature and inspiration of voluntary action have evolved over decades. Starting from social reform, education and health services, voluntary action after independence has moved to welfare, relief and development. At times voluntary action has been influenced by political factors. Development implies change which can affect established interests and this is likely to generate tensions and conflicts. Development and social action are therefore not apolitical. Voluntary action can impinge on politics; different ideological positions may be adopted in attaining the goal of development with social justice to the underprivileged and the oppressed. Voluntary action has, until now, ventured by and large in aiding government programmes. Success of voluntary action draws local politicians, bureaucrats and other functionaries who wish to share, if not to appropriate, the credit and thereby enhance their own popularity.

Indian public opinion should be mobilised to contribute funds for worthwhile social action programmes and projects through voluntary action as much as for disaster relief. Trusts, temples, *Waqfs*, Gurdwaras, churches, charities, religious and other endowments, and industry command substantial resources which could be productively and purposefully used in support of voluntary action. It should be possible over time to raise significantly large funds through a variety of fund raising drives that mobilise and harness small contributions through flag days, sale of greeting cards, raffles, jumble sales, sponsored walks, charity concerts, film premiers, sporting events, and public appeals. Tax concessions would provide an added incentive to make contributions in amounts that qualify for tax rebates.

In the development of voluntary action, the major problem at the moment is not funds but ideas, and people's organisations. Any

worthwhile idea generally attracts funds even if this takes time. It is not yet adequately appreciated that the awakening of a community through education and organisation marks a vital pre-investment phase.

K.D. GANGRADE

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DISASTERS AND DISASTER RELIEF

Disasters, one of man's oldest concerns, reach back to periods of pre-history and myth, yet, strangely enough, are hardly an area of critical scrutiny. Relief systems have been in vogue since the days of legend and poetry, yet the forms of relief, for the most part, have remained unchanged, the victims offering manual labour to the State in return for subsistence.

For centuries, the theme of the super-natural as a cause of suffering has persisted. Walford, collecting the statistical record of famines painstakingly for the Royal Society, refers to the sighting of comets as associated with famine.¹

It is curious that the explanations of disasters appear to remain largely untouched by the scientific temper of the twentieth century. The term 'natural calamity' is used interchangeably with disaster.²

In recent years, however, the awareness of the role of man in the destruction of the environment has led to a questioning of the term. And the increasing understanding of the behaviour of wind and weather has brought about demands that man cease to confront nature—that he should not build settlements in flood plains nor cities over coastal areas where oil derricks undermine the earth's crust. It is important therefore to understand natural phenomena. What is 'drought'? What is 'flood'? How does one study these recurring disasters?

The meteorologist defines 'drought' as 'rainfall departure from the normal'. The agronomist, however, seeks several other parameters. These are: rainfall, the crop pattern, the livestock population, the demands made on available water resources and finally the degree of socio-economic stratification that affect access to water and other natural resources.

From the point of view of the kind of relief required, 'floods' can be differentiated into three kinds: (i) flash floods that bring about a sudden rise in water levels and as sudden a subsiding, (ii) floods in perennial rivers that can submerge vast tracts of land, these floods tend to recede in a few days at the most, (iii) floods in river systems where rivers are supported by major tributaries and small rivers. Rising almost simultaneously these rivers and streams can threaten habitation and disrupt the economy. For the people perched on the narrow strips of land between tracts of water, floods coming in waves at intervals of a few weeks can spell distress for a fairly long period.

The term 'cyclone' is derived from the Greek word *kukloma* meaning the coil of a snake. When fully developed, a cyclone is a vast whirlwind of extraordinary violence, 150 to 800 km across and 10 to 17 km high, spiralling around a centre and progressing along the sea at the rate of 300 to 500 km a day. The winds associated with such storms are always violent. A vast whirlwind of enormous power, the cyclonic storm transfers its whirlwind movements to the water—the winds producing storm currents of water, dangerous to fishermen and ships at sea. When a cyclone approaches a coast the sea waters often rise causing dangerous inundation of the coastal areas.

An 'earthquake' releases an enormous amount of energy which can affect geological structures, sub-soil conditions, as well as man-made structures. In assessing the magnitude of the disaster, the ground response, the acceleration and soil composition as well as the

resonance, the relation between the ground vibrations, and the height of buildings have to be taken into account. The Richter scale enables the estimation of the shock in terms of specific kinds of impact. The after shocks of earthquakes can also cause already unsettled buildings to collapse.

Techniques are being evolved to consider the vulnerability of areas which are exposed to more than one disaster. Known as the 'composite vulnerability analysis', the technique is an attempt to consider the geophysical, meteorological and hydrological properties of these phenomena in conjunction with the physical features of the area.³

A drought or a flood need not necessarily be a 'disaster'. In order to determine the presence and severity of a disaster we need to study the vulnerability of the community as well as the nature and efficiency of the prevailing systems of relief.

DEFINITION

What is a disaster? Etymology, ('disaster, a malefic star, a mishap due to a baleful stellar influence' OED) is of little help except perhaps to indicate man's inability or unwillingness to come to terms with disaster. Usage is a better guide. It sanctions the use of the term 'disaster' for a whole range of distress situations, both individual and communal. These can include fires and drowning, earthquake and tornado, epidemics and starvation, heat and cold, rats and locusts. What have these in common? What are their differentiating characteristics?

The classification of disasters into natural and man-made is popular but is not useful. As stated earlier, the awareness of man's laying waste resources such as forests and rivers, his tendency to build homes in flood plains and on sea coasts has rendered the term 'natural' questionable.⁴ Another common typology falls back on the dimension of time. Disasters are divided by Forman into "sudden, slow-developing or creeping."⁵

The scarcity manuals of several States in India offer typologies of disasters without formal use of the term. These include a spatial or geographical typology—the determining of the scale of disaster by referring to the spatial dimensions—disasters can be small, “localised” or large, “regional” disasters,⁶ a typology with reference to recurrence in time for example, once-in a life time disasters such as earthquakes (in the Indian sub-continent major earthquakes are rare) in contrast to recurring disasters such as drought and floods which merely aggravate a distress that is chronic,⁷ disasters that can be cumulative or superimposed upon one another, i.e. a flood or excess rainfall following a drought, or “a second year of drought”,⁸ a typology that distinguishes between a natural disaster such as a flash flood or cyclone and a socio-economic crisis (scarcity, famine) in which a natural calamity may be one of the factors.⁹

The concept of ‘scarcity’ as a season of severe unemployment and distress offers a remarkably clear understanding of the crisis that recurs in rural areas time and again. Indian administrators recognised that a disaster such as an earthquake or a fire could be followed by ‘scarcity’ or even ‘famine’ unless government’s relief measures were efficient.¹⁰

Such a concept can be made applicable to a whole range of distress situations, including the displacement of population due to building of dams or other projects, the use of inhabited areas to test nuclear weapons, or an insurgency or a riot that renders the population dependent on the State for food, clothing and shelter for a fairly prolonged period.¹¹

Thus, defined spatially and socio-economically, disasters may be divided into two broad categories: the first, which injure, destroy or affect everyone trapped within the spatial or temporal dimension, and the second, which injure one group and enrich another.

The first is an event in time—the magnitude and severity of which are determined both by the properties of the triggering agent as well as the vulnerability of the affected population.

The second is an event that is long-drawn—a process in which both victim and beneficiary are participants, the increasing severity of distress marked by the rising pace of transfer of the assets of one group—land, cattle, labour—to the other. The first category may be referred to as exogenous—that which relates to an energy that is external to the society, and the second as endogenous emerging from forces within the society.

The endogenous disaster may be defined as a process within which distress—biological, economic and psycho-social—is suffered by one section of the community, while material gains and social satisfactions accrue to another.¹²

The exogenous disaster may be defined as an event concentrated in time and space in which a community or a society experiences and shares severe danger, injury and destruction, or disruption of the social structure and essential functions of the society. An air crash and a tornado are easy illustrations of an exogenous disaster.

DISASTER: THE TIME DIMENSION

Disasters, as stated earlier, are events in time and therefore have distinct phases of onset, climax and withdrawal. In the case of the exogenous disaster, the first phase is a threat and warning to the community of the coming danger, the second, the emergency or crisis when the community shares the impact and the suffering, the third, either of relief or deterioration, and the fourth, of recovery or destruction. Many scholars have given a four-phase break-up, namely, rescue and recovery, restoration, rehabilitation and commemoration.¹³ Implicit in this break-up is the assumption that the relief process is triggered simultaneously with the disaster event. Such an assumption is not necessarily valid. The commencement of relief is dependent on several factors. The most important of these are willingness of authority to ‘recognise’ the disaster, and the timing of such ‘recognition’. Disasters and relief need not necessarily go together.

The endogenous disaster, e.g. famine, can be broken up into three time periods: the onset of the process which is marked by a sudden rise in prices particularly of food grains. Work becomes scarce, workers plentiful and wages fall. Often there is mass migration of people looking for work. To the factory owner or large farmer, such a condition in the labour market is beneficial. During the second phase, the victims pawn or exchange their assets—economic, physical and social—for food, land and cattle, home, tools, seed grain, women and children. Obviously it is very difficult to tell when one phase ends and the other begins. During the third and final phase, the victims are stricken psychologically as well as physiologically—if need be, they are prepared to look for food grains in dung.

DISASTER SOCIAL RESPONSE

How do the victims react to disaster? If popular accounts are to be believed, the victims tend to lose their human qualities. In a fire accident—an exogenous disaster—stories of the mad rush towards the exit leading to stampede and death of old people and children are widely circulated. In the case of famine of the endogenous type, the accounts are even more lurid. These include a father snatching food from his son and so on. Even if the victims are capable only of survival-centred activity, would they deviate from human behaviour? If instances of cannibalism have been reported, do they not tend to be rare? Are there also not accounts of victims dying of 'starvation' unable to break even food taboos, such as eating meat or beef?

Where these stereotypes have in fact been tested, they have proved to be wrong. Fritz, for example, has helped to establish that in disasters such as flash flood or accident, victims do not tend to panic. "Flight is ordered rather than panicky. The breakdown of moral codes is rare. Stricken populations tend to help themselves, often accepting the authority of the leadership that emerges during the period."¹⁴ While accepting Fritz's findings,

it may be added that, in general, these are applicable to disasters of the exogenous category only, and that too, to its first phase. Once the danger recedes, the social solidarity tends to wane. "The process of recovery favours only those who have had access to resources and power prior to the disaster."¹⁵

Very often, during the period of recovery and rehabilitation, the poor and the socially deprived not only lose their share of relief and resources, but can even be dispossessed of their homes and trades formerly located within the affected area. The consequential social tensions help reproduce conditions comparable to the famine process. Often, the victims of disasters of the exogenous category may also have to suffer a cumulative disaster—the endogenous being superimposed upon the exogenous.

RESPONSES ENDOGENOUS DISASTERS

The initial responses are totally dissimilar to that of the exogenous category. The onset of the famine process is marked by an increase in crime, a tendency to revolt against authority, a questioning of long cherished norms and values and a marked decline in social solidarity. However, victims can also show a tenacity in clinging to a particular norm or value to which they have deep attachment—these can include the land they till or the craft they practise, or norms such as liberty, religion, chastity of women and so on.¹⁶

During the second phase, when survival itself is threatened, large number of victims opt for identical strategies. Instances of mass migration during famines, from India to the plantations of Ceylon, Mauritius and Fiji, can be cited.¹⁷ Similarly, the pressure of famine can bring about conversion to other religions, acceptance of slavery or other forms of bondage, sale of children, the acceptance of prostitution by women. The practice of infanticide and abortion have been associated with famines. Here one must stress that the acceptance of these ways does not always imply that the victims have rejected these norms and

values. The sale or the abandoning of children, for example, is often looked upon by the parents as the only way of saving the children's lives.¹⁸

The progress of famine is marked by the increase in the social distance between the victims and the society within which the victim lives and suffers. During the third and final phase, victims weakened by starvation surrender as it were to famine. They roam aimlessly in search of food. At this stage, famine victims appear to be mentally affected and are often the object of pity and horror, their survival-centred activities cause revulsion.¹⁹

DISASTERS AND THEIR RECOGNITION

The problem of 'recognition' is applicable to both categories of disasters. 'Recognition' can be defined as the acknowledgement by the community or society of the condition of the victim. For instance, a mining disaster in areas where mining is declared illegal may not be 'recognised'. In fact attempts would be made to hide or suppress the event. Often drought or flood in areas that are remote or difficult of access may not attract relief.

In case of famine, 'recognition' may be withheld altogether, or such 'recognition' may be delayed until the victims have reached death's door. Further, governments can devise procedure to substitute euphemisms for famine. If the term 'famine' is stricken off the vocabulary of the administration, then famine is presumed not to exist.²⁰

Sometimes victims can force recognition by staggering into the metropolitan towns to die in public gaze. Accounts of famine by historians, economists or the media tend to identify famine with the terminal phase of the process. There is a critical gap between the victims' perception of the on-set of the process and that of the community. This needs to be stressed. Studies indicate that the portrait of famine we have today is not of famine itself but only of its terminal phase.

The gap in perception between famine victims and the society in which they live and suffer is measurable. It can be measured in biological time, i.e. the time taken by the human body to lose approximately between twenty-five to thirty percent of its 'normal' body weight. Doctors attending on starvation victims have noted that death can occur any time after that, and whatever the immediate cause, the death can be attributed only to that process—starvation.²¹

What should be emphasised here is that society not only does not accord recognition to starvation until victims have manifested its visual symptoms, like emaciation, etc., it tarries until such a condition has affected sufficiently large numbers of the community.

I need only to cite two authorities, one an economist the other a nutritionist, to establish this point. Aykroyd's description of famine is obviously that of the third phase. "I have painful recollection of victims of the Bengal famine in 1943 who had wandered hopelessly in search of food thronging into Calcutta and other cities, they were hopelessly disoriented, scarcely knowing where they were or what they were doing, and very difficult to handle."²²

Amartya Sen, in a recent work, explicitly identifies famine with disease and mortality. He states the distinction between 'starvation' and 'famine' as starvation being of people going without adequate food, "while famine is a particularly widespread manifestation of its causing widespread death."²³

On the other hand, famine victims define famine with reference to stratagems deployed as a desperate measure to halt death. These stratagems can often be institutionalised. Jackson is one of the few social historians who considered famine from the victims' viewpoint. In a little known essay he describes the famine conditions in the nineteenth century among the Akamba tribe in East Africa and examines the institution of the enlarged family that takes in migrants during periods of famine. The enlarged family is a new economic formation

that apparently had sprung up in response to the famine. Significantly, the word for famine among the Akamba is *Mayua* or 'pressure'²⁴

LITERATURE ON DISASTEROLOGY

The survey of literature indicates that there are basic inadequacies in the prevalent academic approach. Three observations can be made in a brief summary. Firstly, the inability to differentiate between the two categories of disasters had led to a somewhat academic dispute. For instance, Torry states that the findings of anthropologists and sociologists are diametrically opposite²⁵ If sociology has found that crime tends to wane during a disaster, anthropological studies show that crime is on the increase. If sociology has declared that social solidarity is on the increase, anthropology has found evidence to the contrary. Torry does not appear to understand that the disaster label which is used for famines as well as train accidents describes categories of events that are dissimilar.²⁶ This is the basic failure. A large number of studies by sociologists are restricted to disasters of the first category, while the part study of famine by Raymond Firth²⁷ which Torry has relied upon refers to the second, i.e. the endogenous category.

The inferences made by both groups of scholars are restricted to the first phase of each of the categories. The limitations of Firth's approach have already been referred to. Firth, while noting the early changes in social attitudes to crime, etc., has not looked at the strategies of the famine-stricken during the second and third phases. He has argued that the acceptance of what was virtually indentured labour and mass migration was not a consequence of the famine but of a desire for change and modernisation.²⁸ Firth has not considered the element of force in the conditions imposed upon the famine-stricken and the pressures suffered by those who wish to save their dependants from starvation. In other words, both sociology and social anthropology have failed to give a coherent analysis of the social responses to disasters.

Bennet goes on to add that "criteria do not exist to measure the degree of hunger, emaciation or elevation of the death rate serving to differentiate famine from shortage".²⁹

The impact of starvation upon the human system has been well-documented. It is a distinct biological process. It has little in common with a mere shortage of food. Mass starvation imposing conditions of anxiety and trauma caused by the starvation and death of near ones, offer a dimension for further study. It appears that little attempt has been made to know whether criteria do exist and, if so, what they are.

RELIEF ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

The Indian system of relief administration is a blend of medieval Indian, Victorian English and surprisingly modern elements. The system's ability to anticipate modern notions on disasters and their impact, and its contributions to typology has been referred to. Its ideology however is frozen in mid-nineteenth century England. For instance, the system will not permit the worker to earn subsistence beyond the day. It has not been able to formulate a coherent relief policy for children and dependents. It has not conferred the right to relief on disaster victims. The forms of relief e.g. 'food for work' date back to medieval India. And as in ancient times, the State wears a look of pained surprise when disaster strikes. Disasters continue to be "unprecedented" and heaven-sent.

The system has attracted a few notable commentators. Bhatia's excellent account³⁰ of the economic history of nineteenth century famines and Srivastava's lucid narrative³¹ are useful. Recent studies include Subramanian's comprehensive review³² of administration of scarcity in Maharashtra in the years 1970-73, and Suresh Singh's work³³ on his experience as relief administrator in 1966-67 of Palamau district, Bihar. Both, however, are insular in their approach, restricting themselves to giving an account of the area administered by them.

HISTORY

We are not concerned here with the history of famines in all their lurid detail. But the important moments in the history of relief administration are relevant. The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya has to be cited for its enunciation of first principles: the relief of the subjects during famine and other disasters was held to be the responsibility of the King.³⁴ If the king's stores were exhausted, he should borrow from his rich friends, but provide for the people he must. Kalhana's moving description of the plight of the famine-stricken juxtaposes the response of the sensitive king Tunjina with that of the degenerate ruler Pangu absorbed in his pleasures.³⁵ Coming to the Muslim period, it goes to the credit of Allaaddin Khilji that he established the first chain of subsidised grain stores in every quarter of his capital, Delhi.³⁶ To Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq is attributed system of *taggavi*³⁷ loans to peasants that was later institutionalised by the British in two Acts, Land Improvement Loans Act (XIX of 1883) and the Agriculturists' Loans Act (XII of 1884). According to Srivastava, Tughlaq also introduced a welfare system which provided a six-month supply of grain as advance to the affected people.³⁸ Shah Jehan devised a transport system which carried foodgrain to affected areas in Gujarat.

BRITISH PERIOD RELIEF POLICY

Intervention by government in the grain trade, was an issue publicly debated. In Warren Hastings' time and immediately after, the government actively interfered in the grain trade,³⁹ imposing punishment on traders who raised grain prices. By mid-nineteenth century, this was altered to total non-interference.⁴⁰ Secondly, the character of relief organisation in India was determined by the newly formed Public Works Department.⁴¹ The recruitment of large masses of cheap labour for canals and roads implied the need for an organisation to supervise the execution of millions of units of work. Disaster victims were divided into diggers (usually men) and carriers (women and children) to fulfil the task apportioned to

them. A third element related to the policy on 'recognition' of disaster. The provision of relief on a mass scale had to be preceded by a formal declaration of famine. Such a declaration was not made as long as land revenue was paid, whether by the peasant himself or by his rural banker who held the mortgage on his land. Given these policy postulates, the death of millions during the nineteenth century was inevitable.

THE FAMINE CODE

The Famine Code (finalised between 1880 and 1883) for the most part only articulated the provisions of a system that had already come into being. The Code became the model for the provincial codes which were published shortly thereafter.

The Code can be divided into sections that roughly correlate with the different phases of the disaster event—the periods of threat and warning, the crisis, the organisation of relief and closure of relief operations. It offers a typology to enable administrators to assess the impact of disasters. It describes the 'premonitory signs' of coming danger. It suggests gauges for assessing the 'levels' of distress. Finally, it also sets up a monitoring apparatus to check whether relief has indeed been provided to the victims and, if so, whether the relief has been adequate.

The Code's primary failure lay in its inability to recognise the signs of the onset of famine, i.e. the starvation process. What are referred to as "premonitory signs" indicate an ignorance of the affected people. For instance, the emaciated condition of the people, particularly children, is taken to indicate that famine has matured. Emaciation can hardly be a sign of "coming danger". Again the reference to "the aimless" wandering of the people "in search of food" can only refer to famine in its terminal phase.⁴²

GAUGES OF DISTRESS CROP FAILURE

The principal gauge of crop failure is the *annevari* or the 'anna value' of crops. The

annewari is a formula evolved to arrive at the revenue-paying capacity of the peasant in a given year. A crop satisfactory to the cultivator is reckoned as a 'twelve anna crop'.⁴³ It gives the State the right to expect the cultivator to pay the current year's revenue together with the arrears of the previous year's. A crop that is assessed at fifty percent or below (six annas and four annas) is accepted as 'failure'. In States such as Gujarat and Maharashtra, the *annewari* continues to be a critical indicator for the declaration of 'scarcity'. The system was evolved mainly to determine the capacity of the cultivator to pay land revenue. Its relevance today is questionable. It expresses a relation between the high and the low levels of the given field. The 'low' could be half a quintal in one field and only 200 grammes in another. It is a poor indicator of levels of fall in food supply or of malnutrition. New indicators therefore need to be devised to express levels of 'distress' or hunger.

NORMS OF RELIEF

The norms of relief relate to the safeguards introduced to preserve the life and the health of the victims. These include the linking of the wage to the quantum of food required to sustain the worker and his dependents,⁴⁴ the principle of continuity in relief which insists that relief be provided for the entire period of distress, the principle of coverage which stipulates that an adequate proportion of the population be covered particularly through relief works, and finally, that of duration which requires that relief should not cease prematurely. These appear to be elementary, yet distress in India and in most parts of the world is due not to the total absence of relief, but because such relief is sporadic and poor.

PREPAREDNESS AND MANAGEMENT

The system requires preparedness on the part of the government to provide work for millions of people for a period of four to six months. For this purpose, both the work plans as well as the stock of tools have to be in readiness. It also demands that the Collector or

the head of the district keep a watch on the seasons, the state of prices and wages and the other signs listed in the Code. Management is essentially crisis management. It demands the recruitment of an army of labourers, the generation of adequate purchasing power, and the ensuring of the availability of grain. It also requires the mobilising of available skills and resources in government and among voluntary organisations and other agencies and the coordination of such services.

The system has considerable limitations. It does not seek to go beyond providing the minimum to support life. Devised as it was in the mid-nineteenth century, it lacks the critical component of welfare. It has few provisions for women and children. Even today, they are largely dependent on voluntary organisations or international agencies for their support. The objectives of the system are limited. It does not seek to bring about change or to integrate relief with the development of the community.

THE SYSTEMS IN USE

The Scarcity Manuals of the States now in use have not only reproduced substantial portions of the Code, they have also retained two elements of policy: first, the P.W.D. system of task work, and second the imposition of conditions of work that would serve as a deterrent to its acceptance.

However, there is considerable variation between States in the management of relief as well as in the observance of principles and norms of relief. Some examples are provided in the following section which also summarises briefly the administrative experience of disasters during the last decade.⁴⁵

No State in the country has evolved a comprehensive relief policy for women and children. They continue to be looked after by the Ministry of Social Welfare with funds from international agencies and other sources.

THE BIHAR EXPERIENCE (1966-1967)

The Bihar famine of 1966 and 1967 was a socio-economic crisis. It was marked by both

drought and flood and widespread crop failure. It was preceded by years of neglect of the traditional irrigation systems. The small streams and the wells that had been the mainstay of the agriculture had fallen into disuse.⁴⁶ Political instability, the changes in the tenurial system (*Zamindari* had been abolished) and consequent unsettled conditions in the rural economy were important factors.⁴⁷

All the signs described in the Famine Code were present. The rise in the price of cereals was sharp. "Even if food was available, few had money to buy it."⁴⁸ Dacoity, particularly of grain stores, rose, according to government figures, by 100 percent over 1965. Crime and petty theft were also widespread. People began to harvest standing crops and to intervene in the supply of canal waters. The volume of migration to West Bengal particularly from the tribal areas rose sharply. The government was under great strain. There was a serious threat to law and order.⁴⁹

Although all these signs manifested themselves by 1966, the declaration of famine did not come until the summer of 1967. The government lost valuable time during which the health of the people deteriorated. The victims became the objects of widespread pity and concern.

The Bihar famine of 1966-67 can be treated as a landmark. It brought about changes in the policy of the Central Government, particularly in respect of financing of relief expenditure. It established procedures for coordination between the Central Government and the State Government. An official of the Planning Commission of the rank of Adviser was stationed at Ranchi to assist the State. In addition, a committee consisting of Ministers and officials from the Central Government, including the Minister for Food and Agriculture, the Secretaries for Finance, Agriculture as well as the Chief Minister of the State and his principal officials, reviewed policy and progress from time to time. The machinery for coordination can be considered

as an important instrument in stemming the tide of distress in the State.

The actual numbers provided relief for a crisis of that magnitude (affecting a population of 4.5 crores) was very low.⁵⁰ About 600,000 were on relief works during the year. During the same year Maharashtra with an affected population of 1.5 crores had also 600,000 on relief works and incurred an expenditure of Rs. 11.58 crores on relief. In Bihar, another six lakhs were on gratuitous relief. (At the peak period, July 1967, there were 7.60 lakhs on gratuitous relief.) The total numbers on the two kinds of relief formed roughly 4 percent of the population. In contrast nearly 4 lakhs of people were dependent on feeding programmes of CARE/UNICEF.

There was a massive flow of funds, volunteers and goods from a large number of organisations, national and international. The contribution made by all of these including the Prime Minister's Relief Fund and UNICEF were on a par with the expenditure incurred by the government. According to the Government of Bihar, the expenditure on relief was Rs. 36 crores. The contribution from voluntary organisations was also assessed at Rs. 36 crores.

In order to make an assessment of the role played by government in Bihar vis-a-vis the voluntary organisations, a comparison should be made with Maharashtra's famine years of 1970-73. While the expenditure on relief was of the order of Rs. 250 crores, the contribution from voluntary sources was less than ten percent of this amount.

A Bihar Relief Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of the late Jaya Prakash Narayan. The Committee was responsible for a programme of feeding of 4 lakh people through a network of kitchens. UNICEF and CARE covered a population of 50 lakhs of women and children. The beneficiaries were provided a diet supplement of 225 grams of milk and 110 grams of wheat.

The Prime Minister's Relief Fund raised over Rs. 17.03 crores by way of donations. Hundreds of volunteers streamed into Bihar to

provide the much needed manpower to disburse relief

SCARCITY IN MAHARASHTRA (1970-1973)

The crisis in the rural economy in Maharashtra began to build up as early as 1970. The rise in crime as well as the threat to the law and order situation were indicators of the crisis. Thefts, particularly grain thefts, were on the increase. There were cases of violent mob uprisings as well.⁵¹

The crisis affected lakhs of people within the State and beyond its boundaries as well. Weavers in the nearby States of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, dependent on selling their goods in Maharashtra, were also affected. It was preceded by three years of crop failure—the first caused by excess of rainfall, the second and third by drought.

Water was scarce. There was no drinking water nor water for cattle. Despite the best efforts of the authorities large numbers of cattle could not be saved.

The sheer magnitude of the crisis can be gauged from the numbers provided with work. Metal breaking centres were packed to capacity, sometimes three thousand workers or more to a quarry. Numbers on relief rose from nineteen lakhs in September 1972 to forty lakhs in May 1973. The tools needed to provide work, pickaxes and hammers, were manufactured on an emergency basis to enable people to obtain work. Formally, children were banned on relief works although many of them did help their parents, but in 1973 the ban was lifted. To some extent, the rise in numbers can be accounted for by the inclusion of the children on the muster roll.

The organisation of relief during the years 1970-73 can be hailed as an achievement in the following respects: provision of work to all those who demanded it, provision of tools in order to make this possible, and continuity in providing relief. What was achieved was a coverage of the population which ranged from twenty to thirty percent, the duration of relief to over twenty-four months, in certain pockets

for ten months, and in some other pockets, works which were opened in 1971 were continued till September 1973.

The District Collector acted as the kingpin in coordinating the work of all the departments. He was responsible for meeting the mass demand for work, for providing foodgrain to match the release of huge sums of money and coping with the sheer concentration of people in labour pockets, and the tensions that such concentration could generate between the labour and the State, the State having now become the employer. Extraordinary powers were given to the Collector to manage the immense task. Wide powers to sanction funds were provided (to as much as Rs ten lakhs at the peak period). In addition, the Collector could also sanction a number of posts of subordinate technical staff. Relief works were the mainstay of relief, gratuitous relief playing a minor role.

There has been considerable criticism of the government for providing relief through road works and metal breaking centres. But the State had little choice. Given the postulate that relief could be provided only in return for labour, that continuity in relief had to be maintained and that relief had to be provided within a 8 km radius, the State had to fall back on road building. An indication of the pressure can be obtained by the fact that the twenty-year road plan for the State was exhausted during the two-year period of scarcity. Massive organisation of relief helped to improve the health of the people. It helped to bring about some degree of normalcy even during the crisis. This was reflected in the observance of village feasts and other rituals of normal times.

The government bore the responsibility of providing relief. The role of voluntary organisations was limited to providing the much needed supplements.

THE NARMADA FLOODS, 1968 GUJARAT

The unprecedented floods in Gujarat in 1968 caused havoc on a vast scale. The floods in the Tapi and the Narmada coincided with high

tide The towns of Surat and Ankleshwar were flooded Banana plantations, foodgrains and other crops were destroyed The relief system covered all types of needs faced by the population It brought about a speedy return to normalcy by providing food, clothing, household utensils to the landless poor and subsidies and loans to small scale industries A massive land reclamation effort was undertaken by government Government also started scarcity relief works to sustain the landless through the rehabilitation period The success of the operation depended upon the anticipation by the government of different types of needs

FLOOD RELIEF ADMINISTRATION ASSAM

The severity of distress in Assam can be attributed to several hydrological factors—the excess rainfall, the rising of several rivers simultaneously, the submerging sometimes permanently of the small islands and sand shoals on the river known as the Char The distress can be prolonged due to the recurring waves of floods Often this can bring about 'scarcity' conditions which the State is ill-equipped to cope with

The Government of Assam appears to be handicapped on several counts It has no system of collection of data from the village level, particularly on premonitory signs of distress It has no system of monitoring distress

In 1974, there were several waves of floods in the Brahmaputra and its tributaries The government opened two relief camps, one at Panbari and the other at Golakgunj to feed and house the affected But the two camps provided for less than ten thousand people, a fraction of the affected population

Food was provided, but the quantum per person per day did not exceed 300 grammes However, relief to agriculturists and small peasants through provision of seeds and other inputs was better organised

Relief works were provided for a few days at the most for each village None of the criteria

such as duration, coverage and continuity were observed Gratuitous relief also followed a similar pattern It was sporadic as well as weak As a result, mortality could not be avoided The State had no system of providing aid to different classes and occupational groups such as fishermen, weavers and artisans The suffering particularly among fishermen was severe and contributed to mortality⁵²

Disaster experiences in different States have been chosen to indicate the considerable variation in the administration of relief Maharashtra and Gujarat have devised systems that provide adequate relief to cover a substantial percentage of the affected population and maintain continuity in relief for the period for which relief is provided, in comparison Assam and Bihar provided relief that covered a small percentage of the affected population The quantum and the quality of relief were also poor

ROLE OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

The focus in this article has been on the evaluation of the role of government in disaster relief Where distress is of mass dimensions, the State alone can undertake the burden of providing relief Under such conditions, voluntary agencies can play a dual role that of providing the supplements that are vital, and of critically evaluating relief provided to the people Disaster victims, when they are among the under-privileged, cannot voice their grievances Voluntary agencies can monitor distress and appeal to the public conscience

Non-governmental agencies can be divided into four main groups (i) International organisations such as the United Nations, UNICEF, and UNDRO that volunteer to assist when called upon to help by the affected country (ii) International non-governmental agencies such as OXFAM or the Red Cross which are playing an increasing role in providing special skills and resources, such as low housing technology, medical help, etc. (iii) National organisations in India such as the Ramakrishna Mission operating in several

States that respond to emergencies almost immediately. The informal groups that spring into action and the public committees that are set up to raise donations and monitor relief, can also be included in this group. (iv) The little-known but very effective village agencies which perform specific functions such as guarding crops, organising migration, etc., and running village kitchens. The *Gram Sena*, as it is called, is responsible for guarding the crops when they are ready for harvest, in some villages in Gujarat, kitchens are opened to prevent starvation, village agencies also organise migration of men and cattle. The role of voluntary agencies as well as the response of private individuals to distress is noteworthy in Gujarat.

DISASTERS ABROAD

In China, as in India, there has been a long history and tradition of relief administration. In several underdeveloped countries, particularly in Africa, where disasters recur in quick succession, the failure to evolve indigenous systems has led to excessive dependence on international aid.

CYCLONE IN BANGLADESH

The Bangladesh cyclone of 1970 and the Sahel drought of 1968-73 may be mentioned because they represent two different categories of disasters, the first a cyclone and tidal bore representing an exogenous disaster, the second a famine, an endogenous disaster.

Both are significant because they involved international relief agencies on a massive scale since the local governments were not in a position to cope with the disaster. They also brought about significant advances in relief theory and practice.

The Bangladesh cyclone and the massive tidal bore of 1971 swept away a reported 22,000 people or more. Although there was a clear two-day warning of the impending disaster, the warning did not reach the people, neither were efforts made for their mass evacuation. International agencies which rushed to help the

stricken country learnt their first lesson in relief administration. As Lincoln Chen of the Population Council reported, "a large number of countries sent fully equipped field hospitals including surgical teams which were clearly not needed. Thousands of Bengalis were inoculated against cholera when there was no such indication. Water processing and storage facilities were moved in although there was no salinity."⁵³ What the people desperately required was food, immediate shelter as well as housing and rehabilitation efforts to sustain agriculture.

THE SAHEL DROUGHT

The 'drought' did not come upon the Sahel in a single season. It was a case of gradual and relentless pressure upon water resources over a five year period. Unplanned development aid to increase livestock and for drilling deep wells increased the demand for water resources. It contributed to the breakdown of the ecological system. It has been reported that by 1971, Lake Chad had shrunk to one third of its size and the rivers Niger and Senegal were thin streams.

The relief machinery was not installed until too late. The Sahel group of States—Chad, Niger, Senegal, Mali, Mauritania and Upper Volta—were poorly equipped to deal with a disaster of that magnitude. As early as 1968, Mali, Niger and Senegal appealed for emergency rations for a million people.⁵⁴

Although the international community (whose presence was sizable in the area) was aware of the coming of the famine, it had not worked out plans for relief. Bureaucratic delays were responsible for the 'holocaust'. Tens of thousands of children were reported to have died in a measles epidemic that could easily have been averted. One estimate places the number of deaths at a hundred thousand. The traditional hostility between pastoral nomads and sedentary farmers helped to exacerbate the tragedy. The relief distributed in the town did not reach the nomads. Further, it permanently destroyed a pastoral way of life and reduced the proud Touregs to the status of refugees in urban shanty towns.

Medical teams, although sent in late, played a significant role. The findings of the medical team of the Centre for Disease Control, Atlanta, U.S.A., flatly contradicted official reports on the prevalence of disease and malnutrition in these areas. After a survey of the affected States, it declared that death rates had gone up in Niger from 23 per thousand for 1966-71 to 54 per thousand. In Mauritania, it noted that "famine can be considered as affecting the majority of this nation's people" and that a well-planned immunization campaign against measles could have prevented mortality and morbidity among children.⁵⁵ It declared that it was not enough to send millions of tonnes of food aid. It emphasised the need for a specialised food distribution system that would support the severely-affected pastoral nomads. The failure of the international relief agencies to save lives in the Sahel has not been fully documented. Other academic studies are necessary for a proper evaluation. What should be stressed here is that the Sahel tragedy re-enacts the psycho-social gap between the victim community and the society within which it lives.

AMRITA RANGASAMI

NOTES

1 C. Walford, "The famines of the world, Past and Present", *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 1978, Vol 41, pp 433-526 and Vol 42, pp 79-265

2 *Indian Famine Enquiry Commission Report 1880*, p 34. The Commission analysed famine as a calamity arising from causes wholly beyond human control, i.e., as being caused by nature. The term "natural calamity" has since then been interchangeably used with terms such as 'scarcity' or 'famine'.

"There can be no doubt that a calamity such as famine, exceptional in its nature and arising from causes wholly beyond human control which deprives an entire population of its food supply and arrests the ordinary employment of the wage-earning classes is one which in a country such as India wholly transcends individual effort and power of resistance."

For the continuing use of the term 'natural calamity' see *Sixth Finance Commission Report, 1973*, Chapter XIV, p 63

3 United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, *Composite Vulnerability Analysis*, United Nations, Geneva, 1978

4 Wesley Marx, *Acts of God, Acts of Man*, Coward, McCann, Geoghegan Inc., New York, 1977, Chapter II, pp 25-35

5 Forman, in Gunner Blix *et al* (ed.), *Famine, A Symposium*, Swedish Nutrition Foundation, Uppsala, 1971

6 In general, the typology of disasters applied to manuals of all States in India. References are given to indicate the source of the quotation. See the *Assam Land Revenue Manual*, Assam Government Press, Eighth Edition, 1970, Vol I, p 334

7 *Manual for Relief of Distress*, Government of West Bengal, 1961, p 3

8 *Famine Code*, Madras Province, Government Press, Madras, 1950, P viii

9 *Bombay Scarcity Manual*, Government Central Press, 1962, (Draft) p 16

10 *The Bihar Famine and Flood Relief Code*, Secretariat Press, Patna, Bihar, 1957, p I, para I, and p 16, para 39

11 *Assam Relief Manual*, p 3, for the citing of a range of distress situations including border disputes, epidemics and food poisoning, accidents in mines, etc. *The Assam Relief Manual*, Government of Assam (1976), Assam Government Press, Gauhati, 1977

12 For a poetic account of the process, see Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, pp 221-222. "One could scarcely see the water in the Vitasta, entirely covered as the river was with corpses. The king's ministers and tantrins (nobles) became wealthy as they amassed riches by selling stores of rice at high price. The king would take that person as minister who raised the sums due on the tantrin bills, by selling the subjects in such a condition."

13 J. Lowell Carr, "Disaster and the Sequence Pattern Concept of Social Change", *American Journal of Sociology*, 1932, p 38

14 Charles Fritz, "Disaster", in Metron and Nisbet (eds.), *Contemporary social problems*, pp 651-694, 1961, also Fritz and Mathewson, "Convergence Behaviour in disasters", *Journal of Social Issues*, 10, No 3, 1957, pp 26-41

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16 Amrita Rangasami, *A Study of some aspects of famine-affected areas in India*, M Litt dissertation, University of Delhi, 1978

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DOCUMENTATION IN SOCIAL WELFARE

Documentation as a modern technique of library science in India owes its origin to late Dr S R Ranganathan. Documentation activity in the country got impetus with the establishment of INSDOC in 1952 to meet the needs of scientific research in laboratories, a

number of which came into existence after independence.

The connotation of the term 'documentation' has varied from time to time. In the 1950s documentation was taken to be synonymous with building bibliography with emphasis on micro thoughts embodied in articles in periodical literature. Subsequently it was taken to cover building a bibliography and reference service, finally, it was understood to cover building a bibliography reference service and mechanical reproduction of a document required by a reader. Some also include translation service, as sometimes, scholars like to have English translations of articles in French, Spanish or other foreign languages. In our country since English is the medium for advanced thinking in most subjects, documentation work is done largely in English. But in case a reader does not understand that language, then translation service becomes a necessity.

Documentation acquired a clearer definition in the 1960s. The role of documentation is to collect the currently known facts from various sources, organise and store them systematically, and retrieve and disseminate them in a helpful way to the readers or the researchers in the shortest possible time.

Libraries in the past lent books or issues of periodicals to its readers and left the task of finding out information to the readers themselves. But the amount of documentary materials pouring into libraries as a result of research and studies especially after World War II, is prodigious and there is virtually a literature explosion. The exigencies of the second world war helped the emergence of documentation as a discipline. Documentation in India emerged out of reference services rendered in the Madras University library as early as in 1928, precisely on an occasion when the university had arranged for a course of lectures by late Sir C V Raman. The library staff gathered from him the main theme of the lecture, scanned through periodicals in physics, collected about 60 articles on radiation and

listed them under the caption 'Raman effect' This was perhaps the first bibliography or nascent micro document for the use of the specialist readers though the term 'documentation' was not used

SCOPE

The scope of documentation should not restrict itself to micro literature embodied in articles of periodicals, as quite useful information can be had from newspaper clippings, publications containing speeches, debates, reviews of publications and even tape-recorded materials It is necessary to tap these resources also There is no clear cut demarcation between macro thought and micro thought They are only used for convenience Hence documentation consists of scanning the host documents, picking out the macro documents and micro documents, listing them in a helpful order and bringing them to the notice of the seekers of information A documentation list may contain two parts—one devoted to micro documents and the other to macro documents. Abstracts of articles in the first part and annotations in the second make them more useful

TYPES OF DOCUMENTATION LIST

Broadly speaking documentation lists are of three kinds based on their structure A documentation list which gives in one alphabetical sequence entries of documents by authors and subjects is called a dictionary documentation list A documentation list which groups subjects under broad subject headings and further arranges each group alphabetically by author's name is called a documentation list based on subject headings The third type of documentation list is the one in which the subjects are classified systematically by specific subjects using class numbers It is called classified documentation list This is the most useful form Its utility can be increased by providing an alphabetical index giving in one sequence the class index and author index entries

IMPORTANCE AND COMPLEXITY

Documentation has assumed considerable importance in social welfare during the last three decades There has been a continuous increase in the number of books and periodicals in the field of social welfare and allied fields This will further increase as a result of expansion of research and training activities, seminars, publications, etc Documentation will have to handle reports, proceedings of conferences, etc Besides there is the scatter of micro documents relating to social welfare in various other publications There has been an enormous increase in the amount of official literature produced in recent years Very often these publications do not appear in abstracting or indexing journals and therefore tend to escape the documentation list

A problem faced when documenting social welfare literature is the ambiguity of terms used to denote more or less the same meaning Secondly, it is rather difficult to demarcate the areas of social welfare literature and isolate them from their allied fields The concept and content of social welfare has undergone change and sometimes includes everything that contributes to the well-being of the people In a sense, therefore, social welfare includes social services and even economic programmes like food for work, etc, which have primarily a social objective

Classification of subjects covering social welfare poses a big problem No social science discipline by itself is self-contained Hence the areas covering social welfare are often overlapping Hence, in documentation an inter-disciplinary approach has to be followed However, for purposes of documentation the areas can be grouped under different headings covering the disciplines of social work, fields of social welfare and social development

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Documentation in social welfare made a start in 1951, when the library attached to the Ministry of Labour and Employment started

systematic documentation work. This was however more in the field of labour economics than on labour welfare but included in its purview welfare subjects such as housing, health, educational facilities, recreation, etc. The work made humble beginning as a fortnightly typed list. In 1952 its scope expanded and it began to appear as a monthly cyclostyled list. From 1957, an annual volume was brought out at the end of the year with a cumulative index. Later, several bibliographies relating to labour were compiled. Similarly, there were other libraries attached to government departments and ministries which brought out documentation lists on social welfare and allied fields. The Delhi School of Social Work, which was bringing out a mimeographed monthly bulletin of documentation in social work and related fields (1955), now brings out a printed journal entitled *Development and Welfare* which makes a selective indexing of articles, reports and publications. It has two parts. The first part contains articles selected from over 1,100 journals in the areas of social development, social policy, social movements, social work, sociology, psychology, economics, religion, philosophy, health, education, area studies, and several other related subjects.

The Tata Institute of Social Sciences brings out the *Current Social Science Documentation*. It is a local documentation list brought out every month primarily to meet the needs of the faculty, research scholars and others. It is also sent to other Schools of Social Work on request. It has two parts. Part I is an alphabetical list of articles with suitable subject headings selected from the journals received during the month, and Part II contains a classified list of books added during the month. The library has brought out a number of subject bibliographies on social welfare, housing, social research, etc. It has undertaken the task of compiling a comprehensive retrospective index to journals received in the library as a part of documentation work. Two journals selected for this purposes are *Indian*

Journal of Social Work (1940-1980) and *Social Welfare* (1954-1979).

The Indian Council of Social Science Research and its six regional centres at Calcutta, Shillong, New Delhi, Chandigarh, Hyderabad and Bombay are promoting documentation activity in the entire field of social sciences including social welfare. The first project was the compilation of Union Catalogue of periodicals and serials. Thirty-two volumes of the Union Catalogue have been published. These provide information on location of the available volumes of social science serials in selected libraries in India. Mention may also be made of the publication of the directory of research institutions in social sciences, directory of professional organisations of social scientists in India, directory of social science periodicals, directory of doctorates in social sciences awarded by Indian Universities from their inception upto and including the year 1971, etc. The Indian Council of Social Science Research also publishes five journals of abstracts and reviews in the fields of economics, geography, political science, psychology and sociology and social anthropology, one journal of abstracts of doctoral dissertations, and another of abstracts of reports of projects and fellowships funded by the Council. It also publishes five Research Abstracts Quarterly, Indian Dissertation Abstracts, and Journal of Abstracts and Reviews.

The V K R V Rao Committee, which recommended the establishment of the ICSSR in 1970, also recommended the setting up of a "data cell" in the Secretariat of the Council to assist institutions for developing a network of data archives. Accordingly, the Data Archives was established in 1973.

The ICSSR has set up an Inter-Library Resources Centre, a joint project with the Jawaharlal Nehru University. This Centre has a collection of a large number of back files of social science periodicals readily available for consultation. Xerox copies of articles are

supplied on prescribed charges. In addition, almost all indexing and abstracting social science periodicals are also available for consultation.

Some other institutions which bring out documentation lists, which include documentation of social welfare and allied areas, are.

(1) The Ministry of Social Welfare undertakes documentation in the field of social welfare and development and brings out publications on different subjects. It has brought out an annotated bibliography on aging in India, a handbook on social work education facilities and training facilities in India. *Lok Kalyan*, a quarterly newsletter of the Ministry, has been recently converted into a magazine to disseminate information on child development, social defence and other fields of social welfare. The National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development and the National Institute of Social Defence are undertaking documentation in their respective fields.

(2) Research and Documentation Centre (RDC) in Social Welfare and Development, Bombay. It publishes monographs on the various aspects of social welfare which are circulated to welfare organisations, schools of social work, universities, etc. The RDC also prepares linear and comparative fact sheets and bibliographies on various subjects of social welfare for the reference of individual scholars, organisations, and for use in seminars and conferences.

(3) Monthly Bulletin of Documentation in Police Science (an annotated documentation list of books, selected articles, research reports, pamphlets and newspaper cuttings) issued by the Bureau of Police Research and Development, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.

(4) Bulletin of Documentation in Urban and Regional Planning, issued by Town and Country Planning Organisation, Government of India, Ministry of Works and Housing.

(5) Manpower Documentation, issued by Documentation Centre, Institute of Applied Manpower Research, New Delhi.

(6) National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad, brings out bibliographies on rural development and other related subjects.

(7) Library Bulletin, issued by Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta.

(8) Indian Adult Education Association brings out a mimeographed monthly newsletter which contains annotated list of books and articles on adult education and related subjects.

(9) The Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, brings out a quarterly called Documentation in Public Administration. It indexes articles primarily related to Public Administration but also indexes on Social Welfare, Social Change, Social Service, etc.

(10) The Jawaharlal Nehru University Library and Northern Regional Centre ICSSR, JNU Campus, New Delhi, have started recently bringing out jointly a cyclostyled index called *Suchika*, a monthly index of periodical literature on social sciences and area studies. It documents articles on social welfare, youth welfare, social reforms, family studies, etc.

(11) The Library of Gandhian Institute of Studies, Rajghat, Varanasi, brings out a monthly documentation list which is mainly devoted to social sciences but includes social welfare. It is a cyclostyled list.

(12) Library attached to the Ministry of Home Affairs brings out bi-monthly Documentation List and daily current awareness list.

(13) The Library attached to the Ministry of Law brings out a Monthly Index to Legal Periodical Literature and also a list of Additions.

(14) The National Medical Library attached to the Directorate General of Health Services, Delhi, brings out the Monthly Library Bulletin and quarterly index to Indian Medical Periodicals.

(15) Bulletin of Current Awareness (incorporating Documentation of Labour) issued by Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, New Delhi

(16) *Current Literature*, issued by Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla

(17) Indian Education Abstracts, a quarterly printed publication of the Central Secretariat Library, New Delhi, contains selected literature on education published in India

Mention may also be made of the quarterly publication "Guide to Indian Periodical Literature" It includes documentation of social welfare though its scope is much wider. It has a subject-author index to articles and other reading material appearing in about 400 Indian journals in the field of social sciences and humanities. The entries have been arranged alphabetically.

FUNDING AND UTILISATION

The question is who is to bear the charges for documentation services? The answer is rather difficult. Since documentation is considered as one of the library activities, the cost should be borne by the library itself. However, the photo-reproduction cost and the cost of translation services may be recovered from the indenting party. The access to bibliographical services should however be free.

Current researches are by and large action-oriented and hence it becomes necessary that projects undertaken are completed within the assigned time schedule. Time is an important factor in all decision-making and hence documentation in social welfare should be prepared expeditiously and made available to scholars and policy makers alike so that the process of decision making has a better information base.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

Though several institutions are engaged in documentation work, there are many gaps

Much of the current effort is of the nature of alphabetical listing which do not follow any standard code in making the entries. Conventional periodicals containing micro documents, proceedings of conferences, unpublished reports of government departments and voluntary agencies, and documents marked 'for private circulation only' create problems in proper documentation. The efforts of several institutions in bringing out documentation lists is spasmodic which may be due to shortage of qualified personnel.

Secondly, unlike some of the social sciences in which a large number of periodicals, books, etc. are published, in the field of social welfare, these are far less in number. Abstracting service is also inadequate. Documentation services in the field of social welfare will come of age only when abstracting service in this area is fully developed. Hence there is an urgent need for an independent abstracting journal.

As social welfare programmes expand and their scope and linkages with other sectors of activity become more evident, the dimensions of documentation are bound to widen at local, regional as well as national level. A long-term plan should be framed, based on a systematic assessment of the existing documentation services in the country and the possible requirements in future. Documentation services at different places should be linked to become mutually supportive while avoiding duplication. There is need to review documentation activities of various institutions and examine whether they are on proper lines, and whether there is duplication of work causing waste in resources and time. There is also need to speed up the periodicity of documentation lists, since their usefulness will be limited if there are long time lags. Documentation should be taken up as a full time activity, as part time work has very little utility.

KRISHNARAO RAGHAVENDRA RAO

DOWRY

Dowry refers to the movable and immovable property that a bride brings with her at the time of marriage to her husband and/or his parents/guardians, often on their explicit and occasionally on their implicit demands

The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, describes dowry as "any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given either directly or indirectly (a) by one party to a marriage to the other party to the marriage, or (b) by the parents of either party to a marriage or by any other person, to either party to the marriage or to any other person, at or before or after the marriage as consideration for the marriage. This, however, excludes dower or 'mahr' in the case of persons to whom the Muslim Personal Law (*Shariat*) applies, and also wedding presents made at the time of a marriage to either party to the marriage in the form of cash, ornaments, clothes or other articles unless they are made as consideration for the marriage of the said parties."¹ This definition presumably discriminates between the movable and immovable nature of things and the time when they are delivered.²

It is apparent that the scope of the meaning of the word dowry as generally understood has been amply broadened under this definition and covers a wide spectrum of transaction practices that form part of marriages in different regions in the country. It covers the material wealth brought not only by the bride to the bridegroom or his family but also by the bridegroom to the bride's family and, thus includes in it the usage of bride-price, whereby 'a payment in cash and kind is made to the bride's father in exchange for authority over the woman, which passes from her kin group to the bridegroom's kin group'.³ Thus, the two major types of transfer of material wealth which accompany marriage—(a) wealth travelling in the opposite direction of the bride (bride-price) and (b) wealth travelling along with the bride in the same direction—have been considered as components of dowry, subject to certain conditions. Consideration of

the period for such wealth transfers by the parties to the marriage, by parents of either party, or by any other person to any other person has also taken the actual practice in view. Normally, 'property or valuable security' which constitutes dowry is not always given at the time of marriage. It may be given before or after the marriage ceremony and also not necessarily by the parties immediately concerned, but even by third persons as well. This is also supported by observation and experience.

In the Hindu community, as in many other communities, there is an engagement ceremony prior to the celebration of marriage. Of late, another ceremony called '*thaka*' is becoming prominent, especially in Punjab and Haryana. This takes place before the engagement and refers to the affirmation of relationship established between the negotiating parties for matrimonial alliance. The girl's parents present sweets, fruits and cash to the boy's parents. Similarly, at engagement, giving of such presents is repeated on a wider scale among almost all the communities, though in different forms. If during this period, some festivals—religious or others—take place, the girl's parents send gifts to the boy's parents. On the marriage date, just prior to the marriage, cash gifts are again exchanged between the bride's and the bridegroom's parents and relatives. Even after marriage, when the girl goes to meet her parents, she again brings gifts. During the first year after marriage, the girl's parents send her presents or cash at every festival, fast, visit or family ceremony.

In fact, from the *thaka* ceremony (affirmation of negotiations) to the end of, specially, the first year after marriage, the girl's parents continue to give presents to their daughter and her in-laws. All the expenditure incurred during this period is actually another form of dowry. Dowry, thus, "is not one isolated payment but one array of gifts given over time. However, among the ways of payment that constitute dowry, that given at the time of marriage is most important and conspicuous."⁴

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Not much is known about the cultural norms practised in the pre-Vedic marriage ceremonies. Some information for the Vedic period can be had from the marriage hymns of the *Rigveda* and the *Atharvaveda* which mention dowry. These hymns begin with the allegory of the marriage of Surya, the daughter of the Sun, with Soma or the Moon. "The bride bearing a beautiful robe and a coverlet, eyes daubed with unguents, head dressed upon the *Opasa* or *Kuriya* style, started for the house of her intended lord in a canopied chariot accompanied by bridal friends. Her treasure-chest containing her dowry was also placed in her chariot."⁵ The *Atharvaveda* once incidentally refers to royal brides bringing with them the dowry of a hundred cows. In the marriage hymn, '*vahatu*' or dowry is mentioned. Also, a king is cursed that his queen may not fetch any dowry for him.⁶ In the *Aitaraya-Brahmana*, a bargain marriage is called '*Pashuvivaha*' or 'animal marriage', but it is not clear as to which party exacted money. Draupadi, Subhadra and Uttara were given valuable presents of horses, elephants and jewels by their parents at the time of marriage. The *Jatakas* also give an account of how rich presents were given to the bridegroom when rich merchants like the father of Visaka sent their daughters to their husbands' homes. In *Raghuvansa*, a vivid description is given of how the King of Vidarbha sends handsome presents to his sister Indumati immediately after the marriage. It seems that these presents were made voluntarily out of affection in the aristocratic or royal families. This inference has been further supported from the absence of references in the *Smritis* to the custom of dowry.

The *Smritis* have recognised eight forms of marriage—'Brahma', 'Daiva', 'Prajapatya', 'Asura', 'Gandharva', 'Rakshasa' and 'Paisacha'. It is only in the '*Brahma*' form of marriage that the father gave away his daughter with such ornaments as he could afford, to a man of character and learning, whom he invited voluntarily and received respectfully

without taking anything in return.⁷ The *Smritis* regard it the most honourable type of marriage, as it was free from physical force, carnal appetite, imposition of conditions and lure of money. One, however, comes across some reference in the *Rigveda* where the guardians of the girl had to offer dowry to the bridegroom. A daughter who had some physical defects was to be disposed of with money.⁸

The method of offering bride-price was also practised sometimes. This was adopted in the 'Asura' form of marriage where the husband after having paid money to the relations of the bride and the bride herself, accepted her out of free will. Even in the Vedic period, bargains were sometimes struck and the bride was practically sold for a heavy price. Sometimes, out of greed, girls themselves selected wealthy though otherwise unfit husbands, for money.⁹ The *Smriti* writers condemned this practice. According to *Apastamba-Smriti*, "not even a Sudra should accept money while giving away his daughter. Taking money is a sale in disguise."¹⁰

Thus, even sporadic cases of bargain marriages where transactions of wealth took place between either party to the marriage received unqualified condemnation as a custom. However, from the time of *Manu Smriti*, advanced maidenhood came to be decried and virginity became a badge of respectability. With this, regulations which unconditionally enjoined child marriages were laid.¹¹ On religious grounds, the father of the girl now became anxious to get rid of the girl even with an offer of money to the bridegroom's father. The religious concept of marriage as a sacrifice also helped the rise of this custom. Dowry was regarded as *dakshina* attending the main gift of the girl.

In medieval times, the hypergamous system of marriages among the royal and the aristocratic families gave further inducement to the practice of dowry. The rules under this system prescribed that a girl of a lower class could marry a boy of a higher class but not *vice versa*. The parents of the girl considered such

status-climbing alliances advantageous to gain more prestige for themselves and paid the social cost of such a marriage through huge dowry. Hypergamy is known to exist among some Brahmin castes, such as, Kulin, Audich, Khedaval, Anavils and Nambudiri Brahmins of Malabar, and among non-Brahmin groups, such as, Marathas, Rajputs, and Leva Patidars of Gujarat.¹² By the thirteenth or the fourteenth century, the dowry system became a positive evil of great magnitude, particularly among the higher classes.

In ordinary families, however, the amount of dowry remained nominal. It presented no impediment in the settlement of the girl's marriage till the middle of the nineteenth century. It is only after that and more during the last five decades or so that this practice has become widespread and has begun to assume grave proportions.

PRESENT SITUATION

Dowry, as an appendage of the marriage system, is now widely 'accepted' and practised. It has influenced every section of the Indian society irrespective of caste, creed, religion, region and economic status. From a symbol of regard and affection, it has become a social binding. It has penetrated the rural communities and the backward classes also which were once unaware of its ramifications or had a tradition of bride-price.

Prior to the present development of the means of communication, the rural population had limited contacts with the urban areas. The village was a self-contained unit where a family knew about the economic status of its neighbouring families. Celebration of marriage, therefore, was a community function where social prestige or social condemnation on the point of dowry was non-existent. The present close contacts with the urban areas where, on weddings, hosts vie with one another in holding lavish receptions with Gargantuan meals, decorations, new clothes, jewellery, etc., have resulted in the imitation of urban values, to earn social status through

ostentatious expenditure on weddings. New communities, for instance, the peasants of Karnataka, the Golla (caste of cowherds) and the Lambadas of Andhra Pradesh, and the villages in Himachal Pradesh surveyed by the Socio-Economic Survey Division of the Census of India have turned to dowry.¹³

Earlier, the Nagar Brahmins of Gujarat, the Khattris of Uttar Pradesh, the Mathur Kayasthas and several castes in Maharashtra did not customarily settle marriage transactions in cash or kind. But today people belonging to these groups are also adopting dowry. It is virtually universally practised in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan and also Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. Aggarwals and other Vaishya groups in the Hindi-speaking areas, the Rajputs and the Kayasthas and the landowning castes of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh practise dowry. Among the Kanyakubja Brahmins, the Rajputs, the Patidars and Anavil Brahmins of Gujarat and other communities, hypergamy has resulted in establishing a high rate of dowry. In the South, the Reddis, the Kammas and the Velmas as also the traders and well-to-do Brahmins of Andhra Pradesh, the Naidus, the Brahmins, the Vellalas, the Mudaliars and the Chettiares of Tamil Nadu, Brahmins, Vaishyas and some Lingayat groups in Karnataka and the various Christian groups in Kerala are known for high dowries. With the exception of most Muslim communities, the non-Catholic Christian groups outside Kerala, the Parsis and those who still follow the custom of paying bride-price, giving dowry at the time of marriage has become an all-India phenomenon. There is, in fact, no difference now in the pattern and motives for conspicuous consumption and dowry, either religion-wise or caste-wise.¹⁴

The patrilineal tribal groups of the Indian subcontinent customarily pay bride-price. Many castes on the lower rungs of the hierarchy and some on the middle rungs also follow this custom. There are 116 scheduled tribes, 59 scheduled castes and 65 non-scheduled caste Hindus who pay bride-price at marriage time. As they come under the

influence of Sanskritic values, they tend to give up their custom and adopt instead the custom of dowry¹⁵

The form and amount of dowry to the daughter and her inlaws vary in different States. The dowry may consist of movable items (such as clothes, jewellery, utensils, beds and beddings, electrical gadgets, furniture, carpets, television set, radio, car, scooter or cycle and several other articles of utility and decoration in the house) besides cash, savings certificates, and financial support for foreign education or for setting up business. In the immovable items of dowry are included land, house, shop, factory, etc. These gifts are not given exclusively to the bride, the bridegroom and his family are also honoured with these. There are, however, regional, community and caste variations in the practice of dowry.

Among the communities which follow bride-price, some pay only cash, others make the payment in kind, and still others pay the bride-price in both cash and kind. Transactions of dowry are settled many times by professional marriage brokers also, particularly in the big cities.

SOCIAL ATTITUDES

The attitude of society towards the prevalence of dowry custom is neither uniform nor consistent. Theoretically, a majority among the educated in the middle class disfavours it, but in actual practice, it upholds the custom under the fold of certain social and cultural justifications. The upper strata of society and those at the lower rung do not normally advocate its abolition.¹⁶ A number of factors seem to influence their attitude and explain their adherence to it.

A daughter, under the protection of law, enjoys today the right to inherit equally the property of her father with the male heirs. With this prerogative, her claim to dowry seems to be irrelevant and irrational. Many parents, however, feel that instead of a share to property, she should continue to receive dowry. Her share in the landed property or

business is likely to initiate unwelcome interference in the management of their property by the son-in-law and his family. Spatial distance, problems of loss and profit and other family secrets are bound to lead to various difficulties and maladjustments. Moreover, her property inheritance will not affect the practice of giving dowry. Dowry-seekers will try to establish matrimonial alliances with those who possess large property. It is necessary also for providing her with a feeling of security in times of crisis, particularly under the present socio-economic framework where unemployment and illiteracy among the females continue to be high.

Social tradition, performance of marriage rites and ceremonies, and above all the religious ideology of *varadakshina* (ritual gift-giving to the bridegroom) also dominate the average family, which feels that the custom of dowry cannot be brushed aside even under the pressures of modern society. The bonds of social tradition are strong specially among the educationally backward groups. Others who have liberated themselves of the out-worn tradition feel that so long as Indian society continues to practice arranged marriages, considers marriage a sacrament and a necessity, and is subject to the pulls of tradition, the price of choosing a mate will have to be paid.

Status consciousness and personal glorification, it is generally felt, are other major reasons for the preservation of the dowry ritual. Some families are able to establish it because they have unaccounted earnings, and through huge dowry are also able to 'purchase' a good match for their daughter. Some people over-spend just for the fear of their relatives who will snigger and gossip and create family scandals, or purely for reasons of self-prestige.

NEGATIVE IMPACT

The custom of dowry, though widely practised, has produced adverse effects on society. In India since the per capita income is very low, the capacity to save is also extremely

limited. Most of the families, in meeting dowry demands to buy a secure and happy future for their daughter, have to indulge in debts. Marriage often consumes the provident funds and insurance policies of the parents. Houses and lands are mortgaged and even human beings are kept under servitude as bonded labourers of the money-lender or the land-owning families who give loan for marriages to the bride's or the bridegroom's family. Some parents are driven to adopt unfair means to earn money for dowry.

Parents of honest means have to deprive themselves and their children of the minimum comforts, nutritious food and also proper education to save enough for dowry. Dowry expenditure is not a productive investment; most often it is utilised in ostentatious consumption.

Sometimes, when parents of moderate means are unable to meet the abnormal demands of dowry, they marry their young daughter to an old man or to an unworthy person who does not ask for dowry. Such ill-assorted matches, or where the girl is constantly harassed for bringing less dowry, or has to remain a spinster because of dowry, lead to cases of mental breakdown, burning of brides, suicide, or a continued unhappy married life, family tensions, etc.

The custom of dowry has arisen from and also been responsible for the inferior status of women in our society. Many girls feel rejected right from birth due to their differential upbringing from sons, deprivations in food, clothing, recreation and education as parents want to save for their dowry. This discrimination is observed in the matrimonial advertisement columns also where offers of 'decent marriage' are made even for accomplished and educated girls to secure a suitable match for them.

LEGISLATION AGAINST DOWRY

Since the dowry system has been a social evil, some State Governments, after Independence, enacted legislation like the

Bihar Dowry Restraint Act, 1950, the Andhra Pradesh Dowry Prohibition Act, 1958, and the Jammu & Kashmir Dowry Restraint Act, 1960. The Union Government took a further step to stop this evil in the entire country and passed the Dowry Prohibition Act in 1961. This law came into force from 1 July 1961, and has superseded the State laws except that of Jammu & Kashmir. Under the Act, to give, take or demand dowry or to abet the giving and taking of dowry is an offence punishable with imprisonment up to six months or a fine up to five thousand rupees or with both. Every offence, under this Act, is non-cognizable, bailable and non-compoundable. Prosecution can be instituted only with the prior permission of the State Government.

The Act, under Section 6, provides that if any dowry has been received, it is the bride who is entitled to it. Any other person receiving the dowry is obliged to transfer it, under the pain of punishment, to the bride or hold it in trust till she attains the age of eighteen years. If the bride dies before receiving it, her heirs are entitled to claim it from the person holding it for the time being. All agreements for giving and taking of dowry are void.

ENFORCEMENT OF LEGISLATION

The Act has failed to achieve its purpose because of the various anomalies in its provisions. It could, therefore, hardly be enforced.

Although the definition of dowry given in the Act is exhaustive, exclusion of wedding gifts at the time of marriage from the definition permits an open violation of its prohibition. It is felt that the biggest of dowries could slide through this gaping hole in the Act. Parents generally spend huge amounts of money on ornaments, clothes, cash gifts and other articles to prepare dowry for their daughter. If these are not considered dowry, much less is left to cover it. The Act, therefore, does not help the average family to get any exemption from dowry.

The Act has also not comprehended the difference between the 'giver' and the 'taker' of dowry, although they stand in two incomparable situations. The former acts under compulsion and desperation, while the latter is guided by the spirit of greed. This shortcoming in the legislation in the States before 1961 and in the all-India legislation now has made people indifferent to its existence. This is the main reason for the paucity of cases on dowry in the courts. The few cases in the courts in the past nearly three decades of the existence of legislation against dowry despite the wide prevalence of the practice clearly show that the legislation has not been able to achieve its purpose.

Further, a complete ban on the payment of dowry and the simultaneous recognition under Section 6 of assigning dowry to the bride if it has been received by any person are unnatural as well as contradictory. First of all, a complete ban under the existing social norms does not seem possible, and a ban and assignment also cannot coexist.

Finally, taking cognizance of offence after a complaint and that too, after the sanction of the State Government makes the Act still more inapplicable. It is unnatural to assume that parents who are interested in building a secure future of their daughter or son even after the payment of dowry or bride-price will ever enter into litigation, and no third party is expected to spend time and money to introduce social reforms through the courts.

Some of the States are aware of the problem and have recently taken steps to remove the lacunae. The State Governments of Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab and West Bengal have in the years 1975 and 1976 made the Dowry Prohibition Act more stringent. In Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab offences under the Act are now cognizable. The State Governments of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal have made denial of conjugal rights, as a form of dowry persecution, punishable. In the States of Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, the offences now attract

both imprisonment and fine. Display of presents made at the time of marriage is now an offence in the States of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. The value of customary gifts at the time of *Thaka*, betrothal or marriage has been limited to eleven rupees in the States of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. In Haryana and Punjab, carrying of more than twenty-five members in a marriage party is now an offence. Cognizance of offence of demand of dowry can now be taken on complaint by notified social welfare organisation in West Bengal and by an authorised Gazetted Officer in Haryana. The Union Government is also reviewing the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, with a view to make it more effective.¹⁷ A Joint Committee of the Houses of Parliament examined the question of working of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, and has submitted its Report in August 1982. The Report contains a number of recommendations which are under the consideration of Government.

ROLE OF VOLUNTARY EFFORT

When law stands at the crossroads of implementation and fails to achieve its objectives because of the lag between actual implementation and the sanctions under its provisions, organised voluntary effort at the grass-root levels appears to be the panacea.

For a long time, women, tradition and religion have been firmly interlinked with the preservation of social customs like child marriage, dowry and the *purdah* system in Indian society. Prejudices, social inequality and discriminatory practices towards women for centuries in upbringing, education, marriage, etc., have created passivity among them.

Educated women should come forward to combat the evil of dowry in every village, *taluka*, district and State. They should create awareness among women of their rights under the Constitution, enthuse them to receive education and organise them to fight against the outmoded dowry custom, traditions and

religious ceremonies responsible for the retardation of social and economic progress. Earlier efforts seem to have failed to arouse social consciousness or even bring a change in life-values

Organisation of anti-dowry rallies, pledges, and women's seminars, etc decrying dowry system have not produced the desired impact even among the educated *Stri-shakti* (women power) resulting from the combination of formal as well as informal education can produce a force strong enough to break the chains of this tradition and eradicate the dowry evil.

Voluntary organisations can also help to mobilise public opinion against dowry. Social welfare organisations, particularly women organisations with a network of branches at different levels in rural and urban areas could be effective instruments for mobilising public opinion against the evil, in educating the community and can function as watchdogs. They can also help in the enforcement of the legislation. The youth can particularly play a vital role to combat this evil.

Voluntary effort can also help by encouraging 'dowry-less' marriages, community weddings as practised now among the Pushkarna community in Rajasthan and Namdhari Sikhs in the Punjab, giving property to daughters instead of dowry at marriage, and performance of civil marriages.

Popular movements to ensure success of the anti-dowry legislation, regular use of mass media, and organisation of seminars and conferences by social organisations and by the enlightened public leaders and social reformers can also help to change conventional thinking about the practice of dowry

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

The future of the dowry system depends mainly on two factors: (a) the general social will to eradicate the evil, and (b) the political will to provide, through law, an enforcement machinery to fight it.

It is clear from the history, present nature and dimension of the custom that it is old, rigid and widespread. The hold of tradition and religion, illiteracy, status-ego, greed, lacunae in the existing legislation, and a weak social and political will to abolish it have been responsible for its retention and even growth

Social action can be created by organised voluntary effort. It cannot be on a wide scale involving or inviting mass action initially, because organisations, public leaders and social reformers are still few, and the funds limited for the coverage. Moreover, they are mostly located in the urban areas. The strategy of approach, therefore, will have to start from the urban base where the elite, the youth, mass media and finances can be mobilised to support the movement at least among the more receptive sections of the population and then spread its coverage. Educated women, school and college teachers, university students, and reputed social workers can start anti-dowry campaign committees and through a well drawn out programme help in rooting out dowry. The major programmes under their execution can be: (a) organisation of simple community weddings, (b) inter-caste or civil marriages without dowry; (c) ban on matrimonial advertisements which pronounce 'decent marriage', (d) emphasis on women and youth forums to propagate effort by both the parties to the marriage to shun dowry, (e) encourage parents to give property to the daughter instead of dowry; (f) keep a close watch on the existing marriage bureaux which, in the name of eradicating dowry, are becoming highly commercialised and are rather spreading the evil, and (g) organise regular talks, seminars, conferences, anti-dowry weeks to create social awareness against the custom.

Political will, along with the mobilisation of social will, can also help to mitigate the evil. First of all, it should remove the weaknesses in the current legislation and create an enforcement machinery with representatives from voluntary organisations for quicker appeal and enforcement of legislation on dowry prohibition

The enforcement of the Act has become difficult due to the current anomalies in the definition of dowry under the Act. Ignorance of difference between the giver and receiver of dowry, non-cognizable nature of the offence, and need for prior sanction of State Government for prosecution by the court, thereby causing delay in prompt action, are other difficulties. There should be a complete ban on dowry and the simultaneous recognition of the right of the bride to hold it if it has been received. As was acclaimed during the Parliamentary debates on the Dowry Bill, statutory limitations should be placed on wedding gifts, and pomp and show in wedding ceremonies. The Government of India has in 1976 amended the Central Civil Service (Conduct) Rules, 1964, to stipulate that "no government servant shall (i) give or take or abet the giving or taking of dowry, or (ii) demand, directly or indirectly from the parent or guardian of a bride or bridegroom, as the case may be, any dowry". Impact of the legislation should be evaluated after a span of five years, and if possible, free legal aid provided to victims under the Act.

All marriage bureaux should be registered under law. Their methods of working should be screened to check their commercial interests which are usually promoted in the name of social service to society.

SWARN LATA HOOJA

NOTES

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- 4 *Towards Equality Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India*, Government of India, Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, 1975, p 69

- 5 *Atharvaveda, Part II*, Edt by Pandit Shri Ram Sharma Acharya, Hind Printers, Bareilly, 1962, Kaanda XIV, Anuvaka 1, Sukta 1, Mantras 6-13, pp 706-708
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- 9 *Ibid*
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- 11 Raj Bali Pandey, *op cit*, pp 321-322
- 12 K M Kapadia, *Marriage & Family in India*, Geoffery Cumberledge, Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1955, p 102
- 13 *Towards Equality Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India*, *op cit*, pp 74-75
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DRUG ABUSE

The use of psychoactive substances for obtaining relief from mental tension or physical discomfort or for attaining pleasure or new experiences has been in vogue from times immemorial. Drug use is one form or another has been a common feature of most cultures throughout history¹

Drug dependence is essentially a clinical concept. The effect of a drug on behaviour is related to environmental factors of ingestion and personality as also to the function of the drug². Drug taking behaviour comprises the psychological make-up of the person, the perceived environment, and the level of interaction between the individual and the social world. The understanding of such

phenomena is facilitated when viewed in the relevant socio-cultural matrix

The problem of drug dependence in India presents certain features which are different from those obtaining in the developed western countries, because the principal drugs of dependence such as cannabis, opium, cocaine and alcohol have been in use for a long period in our history.³ Another distinctive feature of drug use here has been its association with social rituals, religious beliefs, etc

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The intoxicating properties of certain cannabis preparations were probably known in India more than 2,000 years ago.⁴ The earliest reference to it is in *Atharva Veda*, a religious text believed to belong to the period 2000-1400 B C.⁵ A number of Hindu saints took cannabis to overcome hunger and thirst, it supposedly promoted concentration during meditation. Cannabis in the form of drinks is offered in some Hindu temples. Cannabis is consumed in holy cities of India like Hardwar, Varanasi, Puri, Mathura and Vrindaban. Cannabis is also used during certain festival occasions, e.g., Holi, Shivratri and on marriages.⁶ Habitual use of opium became popular during the Moghul period (sixteenth century)

The first systematic study on narcotic use was conducted by a Royal Commission in 1893 and subsequently by Chopra and his co-workers from 1928 to 1950.⁷ These reports arrived at the conclusion that opium smoking was rare,⁸ it was mainly a group activity at social gatherings. Later, opium eating replaced the residual habit of smoking. Administration of opium to infants was also reported in certain parts of India. The purpose was to put the child off to sleep, so that the mother could attend to her daily work. Some children became dependent on opium and had to be weaned away from it, usually without medical intervention.⁹ Independence of the country brought total prohibition of open sale of opium except through licensed vendors. The

quantity of excise opium issued for consumption in India to officially registered users (the period of registration was arbitrarily fixed, starting 1956, ending 1959) was reduced to nearly one-ninetieth in 1960-61 compared to 1947-1948 by a compulsory ten per cent annual reduction in supply.¹⁰ The total number of registered addicts all over India was 80,809 in 1975.¹¹ Owing to restrictions placed during earlier years, opium dens practically disappeared.

Half a million cocaine consumers belonging to different strata of society are estimated to have existed in India during the period between the world wars.¹² The coca plant does not grow in India, the drug was mostly smuggled to India from Far Eastern countries. The lower strata of society were most affected by its use with betel leaves. Chopra and Chopra¹³ came to the conclusion that even if there were a few cocaine users in the country, cocaine dependence as a problem does not exist in India now, which is also supported by lack of evidence of illicit trafficking. It is difficult to state precisely the factors which brought about this change.

The earliest references to alcoholic drink (*somaras*) in India is traceable to the year 2,000 B C.¹⁴ In India, consumption of alcohol was looked down by society specially during the Buddhist era. Alcoholic drinks are prohibited among Muslims, certain caste Hindus and Jains. On the other hand, its use was permitted on religious grounds to the *tantrik* sect of *Saktas* among Hindus. One of the first attempts at prohibition of alcoholic beverages was during the Moghul period because of the Islamic tradition.

ORIGIN OF THE DRUG SCENE IN INDIA

To understand issues related to the development of policy in the area of drug use, it is worth looking at the historical antecedents. Opium, as a drug, has been a Central Government monopoly since 1857 and has been subject to a series of legislative actions after it (Opium Act, 1878, Dangerous Drugs

Act, 1930, Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, Medicinal and Toilets Preparations Act, 1953) mainly to tighten availability. Historically, the main objectives of legislation to control opium were twofold. firstly, to centralise cultivation, and secondly, to get increased revenue from sale to other countries and to domestic consumers. It is for these reasons that controls on opium cultivation spread over a long span of time have been fairly successful in India unlike other countries, where the decision to control its cultivation has been more abrupt and of recent origin. The lesson learnt is that it takes time to restrict a population and an area to the cultivation of opium crop and it takes further time to consolidate this practice so as to prevent leakages and illicit cultivation.¹⁵

Cannabis, on the other hand, never attracted the same quality of control measures as opium, because its harmfulness was perceived to be much less, while revenue benefits to the government are almost negligible.¹⁶ Hence, it continued to be available without very stringent legal controls, more so because it grew wild in the countryside.

Alcohol use was not introduced by the British in India, but its spread was facilitated by the personal example of an average Englishman. The consumption was accelerated by the abolition of the pot-still distillation and starting of commercial production for revenue purposes. The use was also facilitated when Indian officers inducted in the civilian services and the army adopted the norms of British officers with whom they served.

The main conclusions which emerge from a consideration of the history of use of drugs in India are (i) The issue of control/availability of drugs of dependence has close links with excise and revenue, especially when the drug is a trade commodity, e.g. opium and alcohol. The greater the revenue potential, the greater the controls of availability. (ii) The introduction of the new drug alcohol on a wider basis is accelerated by the social value attached to it by the elite classes or groups. The spread is by imitation breaking gradually the existing social control mechanisms. (iii) The

control over cultivation and production of a dependence producing drug is a gradual evolutionary process, accompanying social change. The decline in its use is an accompanying reverse process (e.g., opium). (iv) The use of a dependence producing drug is closely interwoven with the fabric of society and serves essential functions, such as therapeutic (pain relieving) and increasing work efficiency (e.g. opium use in adults and in children). (v) A dependence producing drug which does not have a revenue potential tends to receive less governmental action and support to curb its use, e.g., cannabis. (vi) India provides one of the earliest examples of use of the concept of prohibiting drug use both unsuccessful (e.g., alcohol by Mughal rulers) and successful (cocaine during the early twentieth century of British period).

TRENDS IN RURAL AREAS

In an attempt to delineate recent trends, data presented here pertain mainly to three studies which have been conducted on drug use and the multi-centered survey of university students sponsored by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of India. The other studies in the country have also been referred to, although to a more limited extent, to highlight some of the relevant findings.

Chopra¹⁷ estimated that there were thirty lakh cannabis users in rural India. Chopra and Chopra¹⁸ summed up their researches spread over thirty years about the magnitude of the problem and study of long term users. Their estimates of magnitude were derived from indirect data, mainly excise sales figures. In one such estimate for undivided Punjab, they indicated that 0.1 per cent of the population in 1928 was using opium, though the number of registered addicts was very low.¹⁹ A similar exercise was carried out by Das Gupta *et al* who, based on indirect data, estimated that 13.3 per cent of the population around Varanasi used cannabis.²⁰

Dube, while carrying out a psychiatric morbidity survey in and around Agra, found

2.27 per cent of the population to be dependent on drugs. More than 50 per cent of these were dependent on alcohol, 17.5 per cent on cannabis leaf, and the rest were multiple drug users (nature not specified).²¹

Surya found that 3.6 per 1000 of surveyed population in Pondicherry was dependent on alcohol.²² In Vellore, Verghese and Beig found alcohol dependence rate of 2 per 1000;²³ in Lucknow city, Thackore found alcohol dependence rate to be 18.6 per 1000.²⁴ In two rural communities in West Bengal, Elnagar *et al.*²⁵ found a prevalence rate of alcohol dependence to be 13 per 1000, and Nandi *et al.* to be 19 per 1000.²⁶ The point to be observed is that all these studies both in rural and urban areas found only alcohol dependence as a diagnostic category, and no other dependence syndrome. The surveys are in different parts of the country and at different times but the trends are similar. Vahia reported dependence on *keemam* (an extract of tobacco) used in betel leaves, which contained an alkaloid akin to opiates,²⁷ as the only new indigenous dependence.

The absence of opiate dependence in all these psychiatric morbidity surveys can be due to three reasons: (i) Social perception is geared more to alcohol than to other drugs; (ii) The respondent did not consider use or abuse of these drugs worth reporting; (iii) The individuals who were carrying out the survey were perhaps less oriented to locating other drug use or, possibly due to small samples in the survey, did not find any.

A study in Punjab was carried out by Deb and Jindal around Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, to study the pattern of alcohol consumption in villages which had benefited most from the green revolution.²⁸ They found that 74.1 per cent of the male population above the age of 15 years consumed alcohol and the per capita expenditure on alcohol was fairly high compared to the income levels. It did not include any other drug in its purview.

In a study carried out in a single village in

Sangrur district near Patiala (Punjab), it was found that tobacco was the commonest substance abused. The prevalence rates of other drugs were as follows: alcohol, 256 per 1,000; opium, 189 per 1,000; barbiturates, 62 per 1,000; and cannabis, 22 per 1,000.²⁹ The study estimated that among alcohol users 95.7 per cent fall in the normal drinking category (consumption of 0 to 10 cl of pure ethanol daily), 3.0 per cent in moderate drinking category (10 to 20 cl of ethanol consumed daily) and 1.2 per cent in heavy drinkers (alcoholics) category (20 cl or more of ethanol consumed daily).³⁰

A survey of 24 villages in three border districts of Punjab showed that alcohol was the most commonly used drug (583 per 1,000), followed by tobacco (193 per 1,000), opium (63 per 1,000), and cannabis (12 per 1,000) in the population, mostly males.³¹ Use of psychotropics was virtually absent in all the villages, including common "over the counter" prescription drugs such as acetylsalicylic acid. However, when villages are individually examined there is a difference in prevalence rates of opium and alcohol which is difficult to explain. It is evident that the opium use rates are much higher than the guess estimates of Wig and Verma, as well as other official statistics.³² The mean daily ethanol consumption levels seemed to correspond to those based on Lederman's equation of log normal distribution curve and sales data. The levels are lower than those observed by Brij Lal and Gurmeet Singh in their study but close to those seen in the west.³³

On a careful review of these studies certain common observations emerge. The drugs which were traditionally used, viz alcohol, opium and cannabis, seem to be the drugs which are currently used as well. There does seem to be an alteration in the pattern of preferred drugs. Use of cannabis has declined; use of opium is more than the official estimates but has still perhaps declined; use of alcohol has certainly gone up. Use of psychotropics has not become widespread in spite of the increased health facilities. These observations are

interesting keeping in view the fact that India is a signatory to the Single Geneva Convention and legal sanction against cannabis and opium have been in operation for a fairly long time. Though the legal sanctions did control the availability of both these drugs, the decline in cannabis consumption which remained quite freely available is difficult to explain except on social grounds. Lastly, in India, heroin and other synthetic opiates were not found to have made their appearance.

These findings in the historical context of India's experience provide some clues which are relevant to policy making. The first is that there is an interplay between availability of drugs of dependence which can alter due to legal policies, leading to the rise and fall in the use of drugs. Secondly, legal action in the area of control of drug availability ought to be started and implemented slowly. The laws must remain for a considerable period of time, statements of intention rather than action, especially when the dependence producing substances are raw plant materials rather than synthetic drugs. Yet statements of legal intention are necessary, because it tends to discourage fresh entrants into the area of drug use. The maintenance of the distinction is also necessary because the use of drugs which are proposed to be banned is closely interwoven with the socio-economic matrix of the rural agrarian society. Stringent legal action only serves to disrupt this usage and makes the appearance of substitute drugs easier. The rationale behind such conceptualisation of legal action is that it can be a method of promoting social change by signalling the direction. This has been described by Ahmed for areas in Assam, where patients started reporting for treatment after the closure of the system of registration.³⁴

The current crop substitution programmes in some countries whereby cultivators are induced to change, aim at combining social change with legal action and primary health care. These are likely to have limited success because one cannot accelerate the rate of social change in a given geographical area or

community in isolation from the rest of the country. A factor which is commonly ignored is that stringent action on psychotropics is perhaps a priority because their use has not even started in rural areas. The relevance of this point would be more evident when data from urban areas, where it has assumed the potential of a problem, are examined.

URBAN TRENDS

There is a different trend in urban areas. Reference to alcoholism as the only diagnosed dependence syndrome has already been made. It is also evident that the rates have been rising, and that in the urban adult population alcohol use has been going up, which is also well supported from the rise in production figures (e.g., the production of beer rose from 310 lakh litres in 1970 to 800 lakh litres in 1977), and has been dealt with in detail elsewhere.³⁵ Wig and Verma, in their survey of some psychiatric units, observed that 55.5 per cent of the patients presented themselves for treatment of alcohol dependence, broadly confirming the observations made in the psychiatric morbidity surveys about alcohol dependence and the rising levels of consumption.³⁶

Banerjee, as early as 1965, found that 26 per cent of students attending a general health clinic smoked tobacco, while 11.4 per cent used amphetamines.³⁷ In a study of high school students it was observed that 34.1 per cent had used a drug over a period of past one year. The commonest drugs were alcohol (26 per cent) and cannabis (12 per cent). Use of other drugs was small.³⁸ Among university students the period (one year) prevalence rate was 38.7 per cent³⁹ and current use rate 3.9 per cent.⁴⁰

Data from seven universities (three in the metropolitan cities of Bombay, Madras, and Delhi, three in non-metropolitan cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad and Sagar and one in Varanasi which is a residential and a religious centre) in which prevalence surveys were conducted under a programme sponsored by the Ministry of Social Welfare, with

comparable sampling system, size, methodology and common questionnaires, shows that in all the universities the drugs most commonly used were the ones socially acceptable, viz., alcohol, tobacco and painkillers⁴¹. The prevalence rate of alcohol ranged from 15.1 per cent in Bombay to 9.0 per cent in Hyderabad. The prevalence rate of tobacco was highest in Madras and lowest (6.3 per cent) in Hyderabad. The prevalence rate for painkillers was highest in Delhi (20.9 per cent) and lowest in Madras (1.2 per cent). The prevalence rate for cannabis was highest in Varanasi (10.9 per cent) and ranged elsewhere between 0.4 per cent to 1.5 per cent. The cannabis rate in Varanasi was almost equal to that of alcohol which probably reflects the cultural factor. The use of cocaine and LSD was negligible in all centres.

An overwhelming percentage (ranging from 53 to 78) of students in all the universities have not taken any drug at all, including socially acceptable drugs like tobacco, alcohol and painkillers. If tobacco and alcohol are excluded from consideration, the range of the non-users increased to 90 to 96 per cent. This is also confirmed by the other studies referred to earlier.

Drug use is far more common among males than among females. It also appears that single use is rather uncommon and that students prefer poly-drug use. Alcohol and tobacco provide the base on which other drug use occurs.

The majority of the students use drugs in an experimental manner. The range of students in the experimenting category is well above 80 per cent in the case of dependence producing substances. Amphetamines and barbiturates have also been used by students in situational contexts like examinations.

The regular users of drugs in the multi-centered survey are those whose frequency of drugs use ranges from a number of times per week to even daily. Tobacco and alcohol form the bulk of drug used by regular users followed by minor tranquilisers, cannabis

and painkillers. A remarkable feature is the absence of regular use of opiates in any of the studies.

SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGE AND DRUG USE

Changes from the traditional historical pattern have been in four directions: firstly, the movement away from non usage of drugs as a cultural norm is now beginning at an earlier age, secondly, the movement away now begins with tobacco and alcohol. The third change from the traditional pattern appears to be that alcohol seems to be replacing cannabis and opium as the drug of choice on festive occasions. The fourth change appears to be increasing acceptance and tolerance of alcohol use in all social strata (if one takes Punjab, as an example) as well as over the country⁴². The difference between social classes and preferred drugs seems to be disappearing even though some castes or groups are more prone to use⁴³.

In rural society, however, use of opium though reduced, has continued in individuals who come from lower socio-economic groups and are involved in hard physical labour, especially during the harvesting season. The reasons for this continuing use are difficult to assess because in Punjab there is considerable mechanisation. The use was present in earlier times and has been observed in recent times also^{44, 45}. A possible explanation lies in assuming that despite the green revolution and consequent economic prosperity which has led to greater alcohol use, opium still has not lost its appeal⁴⁶. It enables individuals to work harder and thereby remains a part of the socio-economic fabric. It has been observed that among opium users, during the harvesting season, no tendency to increase the dose was seen and it was not even repeated during the day⁴⁷. The opium user was a part of the rural society, causing little harm to himself or others. Das Gupta *et al.*⁴⁸ on an impressionistic basis, and Ray⁴⁹ observed that the most of the long term cannabis users also did not show tolerance or adverse effect suggesting that even use of cannabis appeared to be part of the

social situation. This is indirectly supported by the results of the student survey at Varanasi which showed the highest prevalence rate of cannabis use (10.9 per cent)⁵⁰, where its use is a part of the social milieu.

In the rural areas, on the other hand, alcohol use had not been integrated and its use tended to be disruptive. Deb and Jindal observed that in their sample, excess income from green revolution tended to be diverted into excessive recreational or regular use of alcohol.⁵¹ Such families showed increased involvement in litigation and less reinvestment on farm inputs. It also suggests the possibility that with advance in technology and agriculture there must be commensurate efforts to gainfully reinvest the extra income and increase alternative avenues for recreation activities.

Among the demographic features which stand out are use which is confined almost exclusively to males, early age of start of alcohol consumption and attempts at integration of alcohol use. Religion, family and local institutions such as the village *Panchayat* appear to be losing their restraining influence. In spite of the spread of modern allopathic medicines in Punjab through the primary health centres, the use of other psychoactive substances is virtually absent, which is a fairly happy situation.

In urban areas, drug use seems to be an indulgence of children from the middle, upper middle class and high economic status families.⁵² Drug use can be accounted for as a trend to modernisation, as a part of risk taking and normal exploratory behaviour.⁵³ The crucial contributory factor leading to it seemed to be the loosening of parental control, partly due to break up of the joint family and partly due to the situation of both parents working.⁵⁴ There is also a high correlation between smoking and drinking by parents and the child's drug use. It has also been suggested that this behaviour is in part due to mobility of men and ideas.⁵⁵

The last point, which deserves careful consideration is the absence of abuse of large

scale heroin or related substances in India which is at variance with the picture in some of the other south-east Asian countries. This probably can be explained by three factors in addition to those referred to earlier:⁵⁶ (i) the geographical situation of India, which did not favour large scale smuggling of drugs across the national boundaries, (ii) the relative poverty and financial restrictions on the repatriation of funds, and (iii) the absence of any large scale presence of foreign influence or 'spill over phenomena' referred to by Leong in Malaysia.⁵⁷

The crucial questions from the policy point of view seem to be three: (a) whether the process of modernisation can be gone through, while preserving cultural norms, (b) whether the respectability accorded to some socially acceptable dependence producing drugs (such as alcohol and tobacco) in the west, can be reduced, (c) whether a tighter prescription for monitoring of psychoactive drugs should be enforced. In this connection the role of both national and international agencies seems relevant. Sale of some chemical drugs by competing national and international drug firms appears to be redundant and from the country's point of view such an administrative restriction would help in controlling their abuse.

The international ramifications of policies on alcohol have had a variegated history which can be best summarised in the statement that western countries throughout maintained that it was not a drug but food and that sobriety or temperance was an individual affair, while other drugs like narcotics were dangerous to society. The international agreements on these are the Single Geneva Convention (1961) and the International Psychotropic Convention, Vienna (1971), and its amending protocols. India is a signatory to both. The change in attitude came about in 1975, when the World Health Assembly requested the Director General of the WHO to (a) direct special attention in future programmes of the WHO to the extent and seriousness of the individual, public health and social problems associated

with current use of alcohol in many countries of the world and the trend towards higher levels of consumption, (b) study in depth on the basis of such information, what measures could be undertaken in order to control the increase in alcohol consumption involving danger to public health, and (c) take steps in cooperation with competent international and national organisations and bodies to develop comparable information systems on alcohol consumption and other relevant data needed for public health oriented health policy

At the international level the trend appears to be towards reducing alcohol availability and to recognise that it is potentially as dangerous as any other narcotic or psychotropic drug, especially as technological development takes place.

The crux of the problem in the development of policies is that the drugs (including alcohol) are seen as potential sources of revenue and are often considered independently of health and social costs. This is as true for opium as for alcohol. Unless a basic change occurs in the point of view of governments whereby the use of such substances are seen as public health problems with accompanying social and individual costs, the present situation is likely to continue to the detriment of the development of a pragmatic policy for their control

PROGRAMMES FOR PRIMARY PREVENTION

Programmes have not been initiated in the areas of alternatives to drug use, voluntary or governmental, except for some sporadic efforts. It may be so because the problem presents a low key profile. Although in some States problems connected with alcohol abuse have been realised, no organised community level activities have been launched. Parent-teacher associations have yet to take roots within the school systems in the country, hence educational programmes specifically designed for parents have not been initiated. The same holds true for school health and education programmes.

There is a proposal for updating and consolidating the existing laws on drugs and to have a new legislation for the purpose. There has been an increase in enforcement measures in this area, the Central Bureau of Investigations (CBI) having formed a special cell within it for intelligence activities. Among the programme areas under consideration are: (i) research and surveys on drug abuse; (ii) drug education of secondary school and college students, teachers and parents, (iii) dissemination of information on the dangerous effects of intoxicant substances by radio, television and films and discussion of the social consequences in conferences and seminars in educational institutions; and (iv) 'family life education' which envisages the provision of community based services to prevent drug abuse by education of parents and children and offering counselling and guidance to drug prone individuals within the family setting. Some limited progress has been made in these spheres, mainly through voluntary effort. The Ministry of Social Welfare gives grants to voluntary organisations for educating and mobilising public opinion in favour of prohibition. Mass media are also utilised for the purpose. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare constituted a Committee on Drug Abuse in India which, in its report submitted in 1977, made an assessment of the problem and gave recommendations on legislative, administrative, preventive, rehabilitative measures, etc. A National Advisory Board on Drug Control has been set up.

The Indian Council of Medical Research has constituted a working group on drug abuse to assess (i) the magnitude of drug problem in the country, particularly in vulnerable groups like students, factory workers, plantation and dock workers and truck drivers; (ii) to compile secondary data annually; (iii) to find out suitable preventive measures to reduce demand and control of illicit drugs; and (iv) to assess effectiveness of intervention strategies.

There are not specially organised facilities for the treatment of drug addicts in the

country Most of the drug dependent individuals are treated in psychiatry departments of hospitals Mental hospitals and inpatient units of psychiatry departments do provide admission facilities for such patients Some of the teaching and training institutions are also in the process of developing small units. According to the recommendations of National Committee on Drug Abuse, "In the context of inadequate facilities for dealing with health problems, it is not desirable to provide specific and separate treatment facilities for drug addicts It would be both economic and efficient if the treatment of drug addicts is developed as a part of general health services of the country"

D MOHAN

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ECONOMIC CRIME

Economic crimes are unlawful acts committed to secure an economic benefit or advantage by harming or intending to harm the interests of the society or a section thereof. The act is generally wilful and is committed through cheating, fraud or concealment and not by force. The motive of the criminal, unlike conventional crimes, is always avarice or rapaciousness. Economic crimes form an important category of social offences.¹ Tax evasion and avoidance, share-pushing, maladministration of companies, restrictive trade practices, hoarding, profiteering, smuggling, bribery and corruption, and adulteration of food and drugs are some examples of economic crimes.

Economic crimes are sometimes though not quite accurately called 'white collar crimes'. The term 'white collar crime' emphasises the relatively high social status of the criminal and connection between the crime and the occupation of the criminal. The expression

'economic crime' is, however, wider in scope and covers all persons, irrespective of their status, whether engaged in an occupation or in activities not connected with one's occupation, e g , smuggling of goods for personal use or furnishing of a false tax return

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Economic crimes are probably as old as the records though their separate study in criminal theory is of recent origin. Corruption and bribery, in one form or another, have always existed and so has the evasion of taxes. In the commercial field, the famous 'South Sea Bubble' in England leading to the passing of the Bubble Act 1720 is an example of legislative effort to deal with fraud by some unscrupulous persons against a section of society. In USA, U K and some other European countries, attention was focused on economic crimes particularly after the First World War when it was realised that losses resulting from business frauds far exceeded those from offences against property under the orthodox notions of crime²

In India, economic crimes have increased in number, type and gravity during and after the Second World War

PRESENT NATURE

The nature of economic crimes may vary from country to country depending upon its socio-economic structure. The importance of a particular type of economic crime may also vary from time to time. While one type, say, black-marketing, may assume importance at one stage, it may pale into insignificance at another and a different type of economic crime, say, smuggling, may come into prominence.

In India economic crimes have been categorised by the Committee on Prevention of Corruption as under³. (1) offences calculated to prevent or obstruct the economic development of the country and endanger its economic health, (2) evasion and avoidance of tax lawfully imposed, (3) misuse of their

position by public servants in the making of contracts and disposal of public property, issue of licences and permits and similar other matters, (4) delivery by individuals and industrial and commercial undertakings of goods not in accordance with agreed specifications in fulfilment of contracts entered into with public authorities, (5) profiteering, black-marketing and hoarding, (6) adulteration of foodstuffs and drugs, (7) theft and misappropriation of public property and funds, and (8) trafficking in licences, permits, etc

DIMENSION OF THE PROBLEM

Economic crimes in a sense cause much greater harm to society than the conventional ones. A single economic crime of, say, tax fraud, may exceed the financial loss due to several thousand thefts, robberies and dacoities. Their quantification is, however, beset with several difficulties. Conceptually, the categories of economic offences are not precise. Unlike crimes against life and private property, their reporting is very poor. The statistics of detection being highly inadequate, they do not reflect the extent of prevalence of economic crimes but give only a general idea. Even such statistics are not available at one place and have to be culled out from the reports of the enforcement agencies or information supplied to Parliament and its Committees. For certain offences, notably evasion of taxes on income and commodities, the inadequacies of data relating to gross domestic product, taxed incomes and commodity-wise production inhibits precise quantification. With these major constraints, the dimension of the important economic crimes in India is indicated below.

The tax on income lost in 1953-54 was estimated by Kaldor⁴ at Rs 200 to Rs 300 crores, though the Central Board of Revenue, as it then was, placed the figure between Rs 20 to 30 crores. Adopting substantially Kaldor's method, namely, the excess of taxable gross domestic product over income actually brought to tax, the Wanchoo Committee put

the income that escaped tax in the year 1968-69 at Rs 1,400 crores and loss of tax at Rs 470 crores. A wide difference of opinion existed in the Committee over the correctness of this figure; the minority view was that the income that escaped tax was more than twice the above figure⁵. Even the above guess is subject to several qualifications⁶. No official estimate of the extent of income escaping tax every year is, however, available.

Some idea of the size of tax evasion can also be had from the figures of concealed income disclosed to the income tax department and those detected by it.

During the period 1951-75, the Government of India announced four schemes of amnesty for the declaration of concealed income known as the 'Voluntary Disclosure Schemes'. In the first three schemes, during 1951-65, income disclosed was Rs. 267 crores with a tax yield of Rs. 61.23 crores;⁷ the fourth in 1975 netted an income of Rs. 746.07 crores and wealth of Rs. 841.72 crores with a tax yield of about Rs. 250 crores⁸. The wealth disclosed contained an element of multiple counting. The actual addition to the economy or net wealth was estimated to be Rs. 200 crores⁹. Thus about Rs. 1,000 crores of concealed income and wealth came out in the regular economy during 1975. The aggregate during the 25 year period 1951-75 was about Rs. 1,267 crores of concealed income and wealth with about Rs. 311 crores of tax thereon. The size of income evaded every year is, however, much larger than is reflected by the results of the disclosure schemes mentioned above. Big industrial houses and professionals who are in high income brackets do not appear to have been attracted by these schemes¹⁰.

In early 1981, the Central Government issued Special Bearer Bonds (SBBs) to mop up black money. The Special Bearer Bonds Act, 1981, provided for the issue of SBBs of Rs. 10,000 each with the holder receiving Rs. 12,000 on maturity at the end of 10 years. These Bonds netted subscriptions aggregating about Rs. 970 crores.

The concealed income detected by the income tax department for which penalties were also levied has been Rs. 25 to 30 crores annually¹¹. These figures do not include additions made to incomes disclosed by taxpayers on contentious points of law or where the evidence was not considered enough to justify the levy of penalties for concealment of income. The concealed income detected, according to the government, "represented only the tip of the iceberg"¹², the extent of such money being very large.

Evasion of Central Excise and Customs duties has also been very high. In the 1970s, the Central Excise (Self Removal Procedure) Review Committee adopted several approaches to arrive at some broad quantitative estimates of evasion either in its totality or in terms of individual sectors of production¹³. It was, however, unable to quantify and unwilling to guess though, on the basis of what the Committee heard and investigated, it came to the conclusion that the evasion was considerable. In a recent report of the Estimates Committee, the difficulties of quantification have been duly recognised. Over a period of two years alone 24,422 cases of evasion of excise duty were detected by the Central Excise department¹⁴.

As to the evasion of Customs duties and the extent of smuggling, an idea can be had from the value of seizures of important commodities made by the Customs authorities since 1975 in violation of the import trade regulations¹⁵.

Value of seizures (Rs. in crores)				
1976	1977	1978	1979	1980*
36.02	29.94	30.94	40.42	47.12

* Figure provisional (upto Oct)

Gold, watches, synthetic fabrics, diamonds and precious stones were the important commodities smuggled to India.

Bribery and corruption, through misuse of authority by public servants, both of the Central and State Governments, has been a

source of great concern. Extension of the public sector in recent years has added to the dimensions of this crime. Cooperative societies and their apex institutions have been another major area of corruption. The Central Bureau of Investigation of the Government of India is the major enforcement agency dealing with such cases involving public servants in the Central Government or public sector undertakings. Additionally, the respective departments of the government or undertakings have their vigilance units. The States have their own enforcement agencies to cover their employees including officials of the cooperative societies.

The annual reports of the Central Bureau of Investigation during the period 1974-78 do not show any significant increase in the detection of cases of bribery and corruption. The number of government servants involved in cases registered by the Bureau has fallen from 1,123 in 1974 to 743 in 1978, while that of other public servants has increased from 454 to 652 during the same period. The data are too inadequate to dispel the belief among large numbers of people that bribery and corruption have been on the increase in recent years.

Notwithstanding the above presentation, there is a fairly widespread impression that major economic crimes like tax evasion, corruption and offences which hamper the economic development of the country have been increasing in recent years. The growth in crimes against life and private property lends indirect statistical support to this impression.

CAUSES AND PATTERNS

The root cause of economic crimes lies in the acceptance of the goal of material advancement as the only measure of one's success in life and its pursuit at any cost including unethical and unlawful conduct. This thinking has gathered strength in recent years in the wake of industrialisation, rapid urbanisation, and the changes in institutions, norms and values.

In developing countries like India, constraints of economic resources have necessitated the imposition of certain social controls to promote planned development. The licensing of industries, regulation of foreign exchange resources, imports and exports, the distribution of scarce commodities have become inevitable. Despite vigilance exercised by the government, these controls and regulations have come to be used by the unscrupulous for amassing money for themselves on which little or no tax is paid. Since considerable discretion vests with those administering controls, the scope for corruption has increased, in the form of 'speed money' for issuing licences and permits and 'hush money' for turning a blind eye to their misuse.

Monopoly production in certain sectors of the economy and occasional shortages of essential commodities lead to corrupt business practices like hoarding and over-charging of prices called profiteering. The price over-charged is generally not accounted for and to that extent taxes are also evaded.

The unrealistic and impractical nature of certain provisions in some of the economic laws and the existence of loopholes encourage their violation. The proliferation of taxation laws and high rates of certain taxes make tax evasion profitable and tempting.

The demand for money from the political system and the extension of political patronage is another important cause for the prevalence of economic crimes though the extent of its influence is difficult to assess.

The lack of strong and effective enforcement machinery, delays in adjudication and inadequate punishment contribute to the climate of indulgence and disrespect for the law.

Lastly, the virtual absence of any serious social stigma against economic offenders and the enormous power and social respectability they enjoy with their large stocks of illegal money are strong motivations not only for them to continue their nefarious activities but

also for several others to emulate them and start violating economic laws

As regards the modes and patterns of economic crimes, these differ depending upon the nature of each crime

In the field of tax evasion a number of devices are used in concealing incomes. In the business of foreign trade, over-invoicing of imports and under-invoicing of exports are very common devices. In the manufacturing sector, sales of licences and entitlements of raw materials, secret commissions and cuts on purchases and sales are well known. In trading activity, non-recording of sales or their under-recording is the most commonly practised mode of tax evasion. Some professionals resort to tax evasion by not recording their complete receipts and by inflating their professional expenses.

The evasion of excise duty is mainly practised by totally suppressing or understating the production of goods. When goods are liable to *ad valorem* rates of duty, their value is under reported. Sometimes, the commodities are incorrectly described or classified so as to attract a lower duty liability.

Smuggling is increasingly being indulged in by well organised groups of racketeers having international networks. These racketeers develop efficient systems of communication and generally operate from behind the scenes so as to remain outside the clutches of law. The commodities selected are such as have large price differentials in two or more countries.

Adulteration of food and drugs is generally practised by middle level manufacturers. The cover of a popular brand or a trade name is used to manufacture and market a spurious commodity. Sometimes the adulterated commodities manufactured are without any trade name or manufacturers' address and being cheap are generally purchased by the poor sections of society.

Bribery and corruption are indulged in by some unscrupulous politicians and government employees largely through grant of favours to industrial and business concerns by way of

awarding contracts, issuing licences or permits, giving tax exemptions or under-estimating tax liabilities. Certain labour union officials engage in criminal misappropriation or misapplication of union funds, collusive deals with employers and use of fraudulent means to maintain control over the union.

Profiteering, black-marketing and hoarding are offences committed by some industrial and trading concerns to take advantage of supply shortages or by creating artificial shortages generally of essential commodities.

The emerging pattern of economic crimes is one of horizontal and vertical proliferation. Horizontally, larger numbers within each occupational group feel tempted to break or evade laws. Vertically, these crimes have started infecting the lower middle and poor social classes (e.g. illicit distillation). Another disturbing trend is the increasing collaboration between persons engaged in conventional crimes with those indulging in economic offences and their attempts at mobilising political influence so as to escape the law.

PREVENTION AND CONTROL

For the prevention and control of economic crimes, legislatures, enforcement agencies and the judiciary have to play an important role. More important, however, is the role of the community at large which has to generate and sustain the kind of social pressures necessary to contain these crimes effectively.

Role of Legislation: Legislation is required for identification, investigation, adjudication and punishment of activities of an economic nature considered harmful to the interests of society. A number of special laws, both preventive and punitive, have been passed in recent years to deal with activities made illegal¹⁶.

Preventive laws aim at regulating certain activities, demanding good behaviour from habitual offenders and detaining some in preventive custody for a short period. The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 1976, is a notable example of a regulatory law. It

regulates acceptance and utilisation of foreign contributions or hospitality by individuals or associations to prevent contamination of the political and social life of the country. For demanding good behaviour from habitual offenders or their abettors, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, (Section 110) authorises a Judicial Magistrate to obtain a bond with sureties notably from those indulging in smuggling, foreign exchange violations, adulteration of foods and drugs and profiteering in essential commodities. If any offence is committed or abetted by a person during the period he is bound for good behaviour, the money specified in the bond becomes payable to the State.

Preventive detention is provided mainly for offences of a serious nature like smuggling, foreign exchange violation, black-marketing and interrupting supply of essential commodities. To guard against its arbitrary use, a high powered judicial review of individual cases and of the maximum period of detention have been prescribed in each of such enactments.

Punitive laws provide for penalties, fines and imprisonments. For some offences like smuggling or hoarding, the seized commodities can be confiscated. In the case of smugglers and foreign exchange manipulators, the assets owned by them or by their relatives or associates are also liable to confiscation unless they can prove their acquisition to some lawful activities. Tax evaders can be denied credit facilities from banks beyond Rs 1 lakh for a specific period. There are also provisions in certain laws for the publication of the names of the persons convicted.

Another notable feature of punitive laws is that, unlike conventional crimes, the bar of limitation for launching prosecution is not applicable to most of the economic crimes.¹⁷ In such cases the courts can take cognizance of these offences at any time after their commission.

The legislation is reviewed periodically by special commissions, parliamentary committees

and ministries concerned with a view to meet changing situations and to cover defects and lacunae noticed in its working. Based on review by the Law Commission, the punishments for various offences were made stiffer in the 1970's and periods of minimum and maximum imprisonment were linked to the size of the monetary loss involved in the offence.

Police and other Law Enforcement Agencies The police investigate and launches prosecutions in various States for economic offences mainly relating to theft of public property, forward contracts, maintenance of supplies of essential commodities, preservation of ancient monuments and antiquities, and bribery and corruption.

The Central Bureau of Investigation investigates offences of bribery and corruption by Central Government employees and those of the undertakings owned by the Central Government. Its Economic Offences Wing deals with violations of Central laws, notably of import and export regulations, and foreign exchange controls, and with frauds, cheating and embezzlements relating to joint stock companies, spurious drugs, etc. It also takes up States level offences relating to bribery and corruption and others requiring thorough investigations at the request of the State Governments concerned. The Bureau maintains a liaison with the International Police Organisation (INTERPOL), coordinates with other enforcement agencies and disseminates intelligence relating to economic crimes.

For most of the economic offences, there are special enforcement agencies, e.g. Income-tax Department for tax evasion, Customs Department for smuggling and so on. These agencies have also powers to impose fines and penalties after hearing cases in a quasi-judicial manner. Their actions are, however, subject to independent review by tribunals or courts and, on questions of law, by High Courts and the Supreme Court.

Coordination among the main enforcement agencies is secured through inter-departmental coordination committees. Sometimes joint

investigations are also undertaken by them

Judiciary. The trial and punishment of economic offenders by imprisonment or fine is generally assigned to the courts set up for conventional crimes. In 1978, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 was amended to enable the State Governments to constitute Special Courts of Judicial Magistrates to try any particular case or class of cases. The Central Government have advised the State Governments to constitute special courts wherever the work justifies for trying economic offences. The objective is to ensure speedy trial of such offences. Some States have set up Special Courts to try important economic offences.

Like others, the vires of every law on economic crimes can be challenged through a writ petition to a High Court or the Supreme Court. Some important laws¹⁸ dealing with serious economic crimes have, however, been placed in the Ninth Schedule to the Constitution of India to prevent challenge to their legality on grounds of the violation of any of the fundamental rights.

The Community. In the long run the success of the fight against economic crimes depends largely on the extent of the community's involvement and participation. It takes the form of developing traditions of integrity and obedience to law, generating pressure for reforms, giving information and otherwise cooperating with law enforcement agencies as well as the Courts, and generally creating a social climate of abhorrence and contempt against such crimes.

Involvement of the community is promoted in several ways. A continuous process of public education in various forms is secured, among others, through the right of free speech and expression which is guaranteed by the Indian Constitution. The debates in Parliament and the State Legislatures and the proceedings of Courts are open to the public and are covered by the mass media. Several laws on economic crimes provide for publication of the names of the offenders. Information from the public

against economic offenders is encouraged, suitable monetary incentives are also given for the purpose. Several law enforcement agencies support programmes of publicity against economic crimes. The curricula of schools and colleges include education on developing qualities of enlightened citizenship.

There are several representative institutions at the village, city, State and national level for articulating and carrying out the community's will. For strengthening these institutions, spread of education is of crucial importance. Apart from education through schools and colleges, the press and audio-visual media—notably the latter—play an important role. Group organisations (consumer councils), religious institutions and social welfare movements (*Sarvodaya* or upliftment of all) lay down ethical standards and encourage their compliance. Political parties help improve the community's consciousness of the role of adult franchise in tackling social evils including the economic crimes.

MAIN PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

The main problem in tackling economic crimes is their complex and diffused nature which often obscures the criminality of the act. Furthermore, unlike conventional crimes, they are of recent origin, public recognition of their injurious nature has been slow to develop. With the type of publicity now given, contrasted with crimes like murder and theft, public resentment is seldom created. It has also been very difficult to generate public pressures needed for strong legislation and its effective enforcement.

On the legal plane, increase in special laws on economic crimes and frequent changes in them have presented difficulties in their precise understanding not only by the public but also by the legal profession and the enforcement agencies. The trial procedures and the number of judicial reviews permitted under the law, though justifiable on human rights considerations, are often taken advantage of to

prolong litigation and escape punishment for several years

Inadequacy of well-equipped and well-trained enforcement personnel leads to delays in investigation and prosecution of economic offenders. With increase in both conventional and economic crimes, the number of cases pending in the courts have gone up significantly causing delays in the trial and punishment of offenders.

There is an impression in some quarters that the punishments awarded are not deterrent enough despite legislative prescription of minimum sentence and stepping up of punishments generally in recent years.

In the short run, the main issues that require consideration concern improvements in procedures of legislative drafting, ensuring speedy disposal of cases by the courts, and strengthening of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies. A search for the right type of punishment is also required. It is debatable whether the legal provisions for imprisonment of economic offenders have been effective in the control of economic crimes. Monetary penalties can be held unsatisfactory on the ground that they are a weak deterrent and are often passed on ultimately to the consumers. For the reform of trial procedures, thought has to be given to the need for reducing the area of appeals consistent with the rights of the individual, and applying special rules of evidence and trial of economic offences by high-powered courts.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The future outlook for the containment and progressive reduction of economic crimes is uncertain. The processes of industrialisation and urbanisation will change radically the social structure of Indian society. New occupations and professions will develop. Advances in science and technology, unless accompanied by a significant shift in favour of technology of decentralised production, will concentrate economic power in fewer hands. The powers of professional groups with

specialised knowledge will become very important. Geographically, there are likely to be rapid movements from rural to urban areas. The surveillance of primary social groups, e.g. family, neighbourhood or religious institutions, will weaken still further. The spread of knowledge is likely to sharpen the urge for material advancement with scant regard for purity of means or maintenance of high ethical standards.

With these changes, economic crimes are likely to increase in magnitude and complexity, new forms of anti-social behaviour will also come to the forefront. They are likely to transcend, increasingly, the national frontiers and will be committed in larger numbers, in association with persons of different countries.

MEASURES TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM

Any strategy for tackling economic crimes requires measures to improve the willingness of the various social groups to comply with economic laws on the one hand and their strict and expeditious enforcement on the other.

Willingness to comply depends largely on the 'individual' and 'group' orientations and selective compliance with 'good' and 'bad' laws.

Reducing the demand for untaxed money from the political and administrative systems, in social customs like marriages, and for ostentation and luxury consumption would help in improving individual and group orientations.

The State funding of political activity, including election processes accompanied by some effective form of public accountability of all funds for such activities is likely to reduce significantly the demand for untaxed money from the political system. It will also improve the effectiveness of community leaders in controlling economic offences.

By making the political system independent of untaxed money, the demand for such money by the administrative system is also likely to diminish as the two are somewhat

interlinked. The narrowing down of discretionary powers of granting licences, quotas, permits, etc., and increasing public scrutiny and exposure of the exercise of such powers through responsible social institutions (Committees of Parliament and State Legislatures) are likely to reduce bribery and corruption.

The problem of reducing the demand for untaxed money on social customs and on luxury consumption requires the creation of a climate of austerity and economy through sustained programmes of social education not only by social welfare agencies but also by the political parties.

Realistic and comparatively simple laws induce better compliance. It is, therefore, necessary that economic laws are periodically appraised with a view to simplifying and rationalising them and making them conform to changing realities. The drafting of legislation should be backed by strong research cells in sponsoring ministries. Before enactment by the legislatures, the views of experts in the concerned disciplines and the public at large should be considered through specially constituted committees of Parliament and State Legislatures. For this purpose the existing institution of 'Select Committees' may be made use of more frequently. A greater degree of stability is required in economic laws, the issues settled by judicial decisions should not be disturbed by amending legislation unless there are compelling reasons to do so.

Improvement in the enforcement of economic laws, as suggested by the Law Commission of India in one of its recent reports,¹⁹ requires covering up legislative deficiencies, prescribing stiffer punishments, cutting down delay in trials by streamlining procedures, improving detection, and strengthening the investigating agencies, etc.

While several of the recommendations of the Law Commission have been implemented, the one relating to the setting up of special courts exclusively for trying economic offences merits urgent consideration. These courts will be of

high status, e.g. Sessions Courts. Apart from developing expertise and a sense of perspective in the judges manning these courts, they will highlight the social importance of prosecuting the economic offenders. A separate procedure for these courts providing for speedy trial could be laid down. Among others, the procedure may provide for an offer to the accused to make a statement of his case after the charge is framed and the case of the prosecution is made known to him. At present, unless all the witnesses of the prosecution have been cross-examined, the accused is not required to disclose his case. This is very time-consuming. The proposed reform should, however, provide suitable safeguards to secure the constitutional guarantee against self-incrimination. These reforms are likely to speed up the trial and punishment of economic offenders.

The adequacy and competence of the staff employed for detection and investigation of the offence is crucial to the success of any enforcement effort. Failures at this level will nullify fair criminal adjudication. No doubt, there are financial constraints. Additional expenditure on improving the quality and augmenting the strength of law enforcement agencies may, however, bring in much larger returns.

Greater efforts are now being made to detect and punish offences committed by the comparatively more affluent members of industrial, business and professional groups. This is a healthy trend.

Research is also required for appropriate types of punishment which will effectively tackle economic crimes. Within the existing framework, depriving the economic offenders of their ill-gotten gains and awarding them deterrent imprisonments are likely to create the maximum impact. In fact, in Indian society, the stigma of imprisonment carries much greater deterrence than imposition of fine.

At the international level, there is need to impart greater urgency to the study of problems of crime prevention and exchange of

information through multilateral conventions or bilateral agreements. The United Nations has been doing useful work in this direction by organising international conferences and evolving model agreements on exchange of information.

There is urgent need to formulate a long-term plan aimed at developing a national ethos against economic offenders and the incalculable harm they cause to the material well-being of society. The plan should cover citizens of the future through appropriate changes in school and college curricula so that the right values are inculcated early in life. The technical abilities of citizens to comply with the major economic laws should be enhanced and the community's cooperation sought in detecting violations. Apart from schools, colleges and adult literacy programmes, the mass media, including cinema, television and radio, can be effective weapons for executing the plan.

S R WADHWA

NOTES

- 1 Government of India, *Report of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption*, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, 1964, pp 53-54, para 7.3
- 2 Edwin H. Sutherland, "White Collar Criminality", *American Sociological Review*, 1940, Vol 5, pp 1-12, Sutherland, "Crime and Business", *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 1941, Vol 217, pp 112-118, Sutherland, "White Collar Crime", *American Sociological Review*, 1945, Vol 10, pp 132-139, Robert E. Lane, "Why Businessman Violate the Law", *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, 1953, Vol 44, pp 151-165, Marshal B. Clunard, "Criminological Theories of Violations of Wartime Regulations", *American Sociological Review*, 1946, Vol 11, pp 258-270, Hermann Mannheim, "Criminal Justice and Social Reconstruction", Routledge, London, 1946
- 3 Committee on Prevention of Corruption, *op cit*, pp 53-54, para 7.3
- 4 Nicholas Kaldor, *Indian Tax Reforms—Report of a Survey*, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, New Delhi, 1956, p 105
- 5 The Report of the Direct Taxes Enquiry Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Justice K. N. Wanchoo, New Delhi (referred as Wanchoo Committee), Ministry of Finance, Government of India, 1972, pp 7-8, The minority view is on pp 249-50
- 6 The qualifications are mentioned on pp 7-8 of the Wanchoo Committee's report. They are (i) The income assessed to tax does not fully represent the income generated in that year due to time lag in completing tax cases, (ii) the exemptions and deductions allowable under the tax law were not adjusted in the figure of assessed income, and (iii) no adjustment was made in respect of income which was taxed twice i.e. income of a firm taxed in the hands of its partners as well. In addition to these, a substantial part of the income escaping tax may not be getting entered in the national income statistics.
- 7 The Direct Taxes Enquiry Committee, Report, *op cit*, p 12 para 2.20
- 8 Public Accounts Committee (1978-79), 6th Lok Sabha, the 123rd report, New Delhi, Lok Sabha Secretariat, p 2
- 9 *Ibid*, p 125
- 10 *Ibid*, p 122
- 11 *Annual Report*, Comptroller and Auditor General of India on Civil Accounts on Revenue Receipts—Direct Taxes, New Delhi, Controller of Publications, Government of India
- 12 Public Accounts Committee, 123rd Report, *op cit*, p 118
- 13 Government of India, *Report of the Central Excise (Self Removal Procedure) Review Committee*, 1973, Controller of Publications, New Delhi, p 65, para 40
- 14 *Estimates Committee (1978-79)*, 6th Lok Sabha, 28th Report, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, pp 101-102
- 15 Information supplied to Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament in India) on 16 December 1980 in reply to Question No 2362
- 16 See Appendices 1 to 8 of the 29th Report of the Law Commission of India, New Delhi, on "Proposal to include Certain Social and Economic Offences in the Indian Penal Code", Controller of Printing, Government of India, 1966. It gives the list of enactments separately for each category of economic crimes enumerated in para 6 of this article. After the Report of the Commission in 1966, the major new enactments dealing with economic crimes have been (i) The Gold (Control) Act, 1968, (ii) The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969, (iii) The Maintenance of Internal Security Act, 1971 (since repealed), (iv) Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972, (v) The Foreign Exchange

Exchange Regulation Act, 1947), (vi) Conservation of Foreign Exchange and prevention of smuggling Activities Act, 1974, (vii) The Economic Offences Inapplication of Limitation) Act, 1974, (viii) The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 1976, (ix) The Smugglers and Foreign Exchange manipulators (Forfeiture of Property) Act, 1976, (x) The Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980, and (xi) The National Security Act, 1980

- 17 There are 20 enactments dealing with economic crimes that are listed in the Schedule to "The Economic Offences (Inapplication of Limitation) Act, 1974"
- 18 They are at Entry Nos 19, 91, 100, 104, 126, 127 and 129 of the Ninth Schedule
- 19 Government of India, *Forty-Seventh Report on the Trial and Punishment of Social and Economic Offences*, Ministry of Law and Justice, New Delhi, 1972, Chapters 7 to 18

EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

The word 'education' has been derived from the Latin *educare* which means "to lead out" That is to say, the role of education should be growth and development of individual potentialities

After independence, efforts started through the development planning process for achieving the fourfold objectives of growth, modernisation, self-reliance and social justice These can be achieved only through deep structural changes in the economy, socio-cultural changes in the value system and the institutions, and psychological changes in the attitudes and motivations of the people Being a vital instrument for all these changes, education obviously assumes a significant role in the process of development Besides, it also provides training to the work force for various jobs and helps in the development of new technologies in various sectors of the economy

Through the network of schools, colleges, universities and other institutions for research and training under the formal system and a variety of non-formal and informal arrangements, the educational process seeks to develop the vast human resources of the country At the same time it also endeavours to create conditions under which the living standards of the masses are raised and greater equality of opportunity in all fields is ensured

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Learning has been a tradition of Indian culture and education has always been valued The traditional system helped in preserving our ancient cultural heritage by transmitting knowledge and skills from one generation to another But it lost its relevance in the nineteenth century after the English-dominated educational system was introduced The new system gained prestige mainly because it provided access to employment under government The system was designed primarily to protect and strengthen colonial rule

At one stage, there were major differences over the objectives of education, medium of instruction, agencies for organising educational institutions, and methods to be adopted for spreading education However, as President of the General Committee of Public Instruction and Law Member in the Governor General's Executive Council, Macaulay propounded views in his famous minute of 1835 which proved decisive He stated that the object of educational policy in India should be the spread of western learning through the medium of the English language He also suggested the use of institutions of oriental learning for the promotion of English education No direct responsibility was proposed to be assumed for the education of the masses It was thought that if a class of people could be educated in English, this would help in spreading education among the masses

The decision led to expansion of the English educational system by foreign missionaries, as also by Indian enterprise. Wood's Educational Despatch of 1854, based on a thorough enquiry into educational developments in India by a Select Committee of the House of Commons, reiterated the major objectives of education in India as stated in Macaulay's minute. It also recommended establishment of graded schools and universities on the British pattern, provision for grant-in-aid to encourage private enterprise, encouragement to the education of women, and setting up of Education Departments to direct and supervise educational institutions.

The policy directives suggested in Wood's Despatch were not implemented, so that school education progressed at a very slow rate. The Indian Education Commission (1884) reviewed the situation and recommended that primary education, being an important instrument for the instruction of the masses, should be considered as the direct responsibility of government and statutory compulsion should be introduced, if necessary. It also recommended that the content of primary education should be related to the needs and lives of the people and the medium of instruction should be the vernacular. The other recommendations of the Commission included improvement of administration and quality of teachers, and provision of liberal grants to organisations running secondary schools. In the early years of the present century, reforms were introduced in higher education, a beginning was made in agricultural education, and primary education was expanded. Greater responsibility was taken by the Central Government for financing education and a Department of Education was established under the Government of India. Education became a provincial subject under the Government of India Act, 1935.

At the time of independence, there were 1,92,000 primary schools with enrolment of over 102 lakhs, about 13,000 middle and secondary schools with enrolment of nearly 23 lakhs, and 16 universities with a large number

of affiliated colleges and a student strength of 1,26,000. The problem of adult illiteracy had begun to receive attention before independence, and a large number of night schools were opened for the benefit of working adults, many of them through non-official voluntary effort.

With a view to reconstructing the educational system and relating it to the needs and environment of the people under the inspiration of Gandhiji, the 'Wardha Scheme of Basic Education' was formulated. The main features of this scheme were (i) provision of at least seven years elementary education to each child in the age group 7-14 years, (ii) organisation of education around some profit-yielding vocation (craft) which should enable the student to pay for the cost through the product of his labour, (iii) use of mother tongue as medium of instruction, (iv) liquidation of illiteracy, and (v) greater stress on the education of Harijans and weaker sections.

As part of post-war reconstruction planning, a long-term plan was prepared by Sir John Sargent under the aegis of the Central Advisory Board of Education. This was a very comprehensive plan touching all sectors of education, from the pre-primary to the highest level of general and professional education and incorporating in itself the central principle of the Wardha Scheme, namely, "learning through activity". But the scheme met with criticism mainly on the ground that forty years was too long a period in relation to the country's need for rapid development.

THE CONSTITUTION

Serious efforts to evolve a national system of education, which could meet the country's aspirations and socio-economic and political requirements, began after independence. Education was accepted as a major instrument for development through improvement of human resources, training of manpower in various skills and professions, and promotion of applied research in physical and social

sciences. New ideas had been thrown up by the National Planning Committee of the Indian National Congress and the University Grants Commission.

The Constitution placed the major responsibility for educational development on the States, making education a State subject. Education in Union Territories and Centrally administered areas remained with the Centre, which was given the responsibility for coordination and determination of standards in institutions for higher education. The Central Government's responsibilities also included research, training of the vocational and technical labour force, and maintenance of central universities and of institutions for scientific and technical education fully or partly financed by the Government of India and declared by Parliament as institutions of national importance. The Union Ministry of Education, with its subordinate and attached organisations, was entrusted with these functions.

Realising the importance of a basic minimum of education for all citizens, in Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy, the Constitution declared that within a period of 10 years from its commencement, the State should endeavour to provide for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. Under Article 46, the Constitution also provided for promotion, with special care, of the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the society and in particular of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

EDUCATIONAL COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

Three important Commissions have contributed significantly to the process of rethinking in education which began in the early fifties. These were the University Education Commission (1948-49), the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), and the Education Commission (1964-66). In addition to these Commissions, several

Committees were also appointed from time to time to study specific problems. Important among these were the Committee on Elementary Education (1952-53), the Rural Higher Education Committee (1954-55), the Committee on the Three Year Degree Course (1956-58), the National Committee on Women's Education (1958-59) and the Committee of Members of Parliament on Education (1967).

The University Education Commission, with Dr S Radhakrishnan as chairman, submitted its report in 1949. The major recommendations of the Commission were

- (i) Universities should play a greater role in the advancement of knowledge by concentrating on fundamental research and leaving applied research to industry, administrative or non-university scientific organisations,
- (ii) University education should be placed on the concurrent list;
- (iii) The Central Government should accept responsibility with regard to finance, coordination, adoption of national policies, maintenance of standards and liaison between universities and research laboratories, etc ,
- (iv) A University Grants Commission should be established for allocating grants to universities, and
- (v) There should be no university of the purely affiliating type.

Since the Commission submitted its report before the adoption of the Constitution, its major recommendations, specially about the sharing of responsibilities between the Centre and the States, were incorporated in the Constitution. However, the recommendation in favour of keeping higher education on the concurrent list was not accepted. The University Grants Commission (UGC) was established by an executive order in 1953 and was converted into a statutory body in 1956. The UGC has since played a vital role in shaping the policies and programmes for

higher education and the development of the university system

The Secondary Education Commission was appointed under the chairmanship of Dr A L Mudaliar in 1952 to look into the functioning of the secondary education system and to make recommendations for its reorganisation, so that it could serve more effectively as the preparatory stage for university and other higher education and also as a terminal state for the preparation of middle-level manpower. The Commission presented its report in 1953. Its principal recommendations, which were mostly accepted, were:

- (i) The duration of the school course should be 11 years followed by a three-year degree course. (The Commission was of the view that the subject matter covered up to the intermediate stage within 12 years could be completed within 11 years),
- (ii) The secondary stage of three years should have in its curricula three languages (mother tongue, English, and Hindi for those whose mother tongue is not Hindi, a modern Indian language for those whose mother tongue is Hindi), a common course of social studies and general science, one craft and three additional subjects from seven prescribed groups, viz., Humanities, Science, Technical, Commercial, Agriculture, Fine Arts and Home Science,
- (iii) Multi-purpose schools should be established with a view to diversifying the secondary school curriculum and providing terminal courses in the specified branches

The Commission also recommended various measures for the reform of examinations, raising the quality of teachers and teaching, and providing educational and vocational guidance to students. Several States reduced the duration of the secondary stage to 11 years, introducing diversified courses from Class IX and established a number of multi-purpose higher secondary schools on the pattern

recommended by the Commission

The University Education Commission and the Secondary Education Commission had surveyed two important components of the educational system. Several other committees, task forces and other bodies appointed from time to time, had studied specific problems and made recommendations. However, none of them had looked at the problems of development of the educational system as a whole in an integrated manner with a view to achieving the stated goals over a fixed span of time. Because of the fragmented approach a national policy on education, which could take a comprehensive view of the problems and devise long-term strategies, had yet to emerge. The Education Commission appointed in 1964 under the Chairmanship of Dr D S Kothari was, therefore, required to look into the functioning of the entire educational system and advise government on "the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects". The report of the Commission, which was submitted in 1966, under the title, *Education and National Development*, is a comprehensive document presenting a detailed analysis of the entire system and making concrete proposals for the balanced development of all sectors of education. The Commission was of the view that the "existing system of education designed primarily to meet the needs of imperial administration within the limits set by feudal and traditional society, will need radical changes if it is to meet the purposes of a democratic and socialist society". The Commission made important recommendations concerning objectives, teaching methods, programmes, size and composition of the student body, selection and professional preparation of teachers, and organisation of education. It also presented a plan of action covering the 20-year period of 1966-86.

NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION

The recommendations of the Education

Commission were considered in various official and non-official forums, including the Central Advisory Board of Education, and a Committee of the Members of Parliament specially was also set up. On the basis of consensus emerging from all these discussions, a draft "National Policy on Education" was prepared. This document was issued in the form of a Government of India Resolution in 1968 after approval by Parliament. The main features of the Policy Resolution were

(i) Strenuous efforts for early fulfilment of the constitutional directive of providing free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14, with necessary action to reduce wastage and stagnation,

(ii) Development of regional languages, teaching of Hindi and English, and of a modern Indian language in Hindi-speaking States and regional languages, Hindi and English in non-Hindi States at the secondary stage, and adoption of regional languages as media of instruction at the university stage;

(iii) Equalisation of educational opportunities by removing regional imbalances in the provision of educational opportunities, adoption of a common school system and giving greater emphasis to the education of girls, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes and to physically and mentally handicapped children;

(iv) Introduction of work experience and national service programmes in school and college curricula with a view to bringing schools and colleges closer to the community,

(v) High priority to science education and research,

(vi) Special emphasis on the development of education for agriculture and industry with at least one agricultural university in each State, and relating technical education more closely to industry,

(vii) Expeditious expansion of facilities at the secondary stage to cover areas and socio-economic groups which have lacked these facilities in the past, and increase in vocational

and technical content in conformity with the requirements of the developing economy,

(viii) Restricting admissions at the higher stage to the extent of availability of physical facilities, restraining the establishment of new universities, improvement of standards of teaching and research and strengthening of centres of advanced study,

(ix) Development of a large programme of part-time education and correspondence education, and

(x) Adoption of the educational structure on the 10+2+3 pattern

The policy statement also mentioned that investment on education should be gradually increased to the level of six per cent of the national income so as to meet the needs of additional resources for implementing the policy

The Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Five Year Plans, which have been formulated after the adoption of the policy, have broadly followed the educational policy agreed to in 1967. However, the actual implementation has left large gaps. Even in respect of allocations of resources, education could reach only about 4 per cent of the national income as against 6 per cent envisaged in the policy statement. Inter-sectoral allocations within education have failed to reflect adequate concern for the priorities envisaged in the national policy

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FIVE-YEAR PLANS

Planned development in the country started in 1951 when the Planning Commission was set up and the First Five Year Plan was launched. Development of human resources was recognised as one of the basic objectives of socio-economic planning.

At the beginning of the First Plan, available educational facilities were quite inadequate. Only 16.67 per cent of the population was literate and elementary schools enrolled even less than a third of the child population in the age-group 6-14. Wide divergences existed

between levels of educational development in different States and parts of the same State. There were glaring disparities in educational facilities in urban and rural areas, between men and women, and between socially backward and other communities. Girls constituted respectively 28 per cent, 18 per cent and 13 per cent of the total enrolment at the primary, middle and high school stages. The duration and standards of education varied considerably between States and the rates of wastage and stagnation were exceedingly high.

Taking a view of the prevailing conditions, the First Plan proposed

- (i) Reorientation of the educational system and integration of its different stages and branches,
- (ii) Expansion of various fields, especially of basic and social education and remodelling of the secondary, technical and vocational education,
- (iii) Consolidation of the existing secondary and university education and devising a system of higher education suited to the needs of the rural areas,
- (iv) Expansion of facilities for women's education, especially in rural areas,
- (v) Training of teachers, especially of women and basic school teachers, and improvement in pay scales and service conditions of teachers, and
- (vi) Assistance to backward States by way of preferential grants.

Since 1951-52 there have been systematic efforts to reorganise and develop the educational system. However, the emphasis in various plans, has been changing from one aspect to another. While in the first three five year plans, the major stress was on the reconstruction and expansion of the system, in subsequent plans qualitative improvement has received greater attention, with special consideration for tribal and backward communities.

The educational system has expanded impressively since the early fifties. The total

number of institutions has risen by nearly 130 per cent and enrolment has increased at an average annual rate of more than 7 per cent. According to the Fourth All-India Educational Survey (1978-79), primary schooling facilities were available to 92.8 per cent of the rural population within a walking distance of 1 km and to 97.8 per cent within 2 kms, 85 per cent of the total number of children in the age-group 6-11 and 40 per cent in the age-group 11-14 are enrolled in schools. Higher and technical education facilities have been expanded to match the requirements of educationally and technically qualified manpower in different sectors of the economy. Expansion of the network of technical institutions and research laboratories/institutions has given to the country the third largest stock of scientific and technical manpower in the world.

Major institutional structures created during the period for qualitative improvement of education at various levels include the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) at the Central level and the State Councils of Educational Research and Training and State Institutes of Education in the States. Pay scales and service conditions of teachers have been improved and expansion and improvement of teacher training facilities has helped improve the curriculum, teaching methods and teacher competence. Important developments under major sectors of education are briefly described below.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

The B. G. Kher Committee (1950) had recommended that the goal of universal and free education for all children in age group 6-14 should be achieved by 1960. This recommendation was incorporated in the Constitution and, within the limits of the available resources, serious efforts began with the First Plan for the expansion of schooling.

facilities. While for a variety of causes, the directive still remains to be fulfilled, the overall results are quite significant. Primary schooling facilities (classes I-V) are now available within a walking distance of 2 km to almost the entire population and a middle school (classes VI-VIII) is available to almost every child within 5 km. The number of primary and middle schools has increased from 2,23,000 in 1950-51 to more than 6,00,000 at the beginning of the Sixth Plan. A uniform pattern of five years' primary education followed by 3 years middle or upper primary education, has been accepted almost all over the country. Syllabi and text books have been considerably improved, making them more relevant to national needs

and the local and regional environment. Enrolment in primary and middle schools has gone up from 22.3 million during 1951 to 90.5 million in 1979-80. The table A below gives an idea of the progress of enrolment at the primary and middle stages through successive Five Year Plans.

The aim of the Sixth Plan (1980-85) is to raise enrolment at the primary stage to 82.6 million and at the middle stage to 25.8 million. If these targets are achieved, then 95 per cent of children in the age-group 6-11 and 50.3 per cent in the age-group 11-14 would be enrolled in schools. The aggregate percentage for the age-group 6-14 would be 76.7 per cent. In order to achieve the target a large programme

TABLE—A
Enrolment at the elementary stage

(in lakhs)

Year	Primary stage (Classes I-V)		Middle stage (Classes VI-VIII)		Elementary stage (Class I-VIII)	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1950-51	192 (42.6)	54 (24.9)	31 (12.9)	5 (4.3)	223 (32.0)	59 (17.9)
1955-56	251 (52.8)	76 (32.8)	43 (16.5)	9 (6.9)	294 (40.0)	85 (23.5)
1960-61	350 (62.4)	114 (41.4)	67 (22.5)	16 (11.3)	417 (48.5)	130 (31.2)
1965-66	505 (76.7)	183 (56.5)	105 (30.9)	28 (17.0)	610 (61.1)	211 (43.2)
1970-71	571 (78.6)	213 (60.5)	133 (33.4)	39 (19.9)	704 (62.6)	252 (46.0)
1975-76	657 (83.8)	250 (66.1)	167 (36.7)	50 (23.9)	817 (67.0)	300 (51.1)
1979-80	710 (83.6)	272 (65.9)	195 (40.2)	65 (21.1)	905 (67.8)	337 (52.0)

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate the enrolment as percentage of the population in the corresponding age group.

of non-formal education has been planned so that those who cannot attend full time schools may still be brought within the fold of the educational system. Simultaneous efforts are also being made to reduce wastage and improve the retention of children in schools. Elementary education now forms part of the minimum needs programme.

ADULT EDUCATION

Literacy in the country has increased from 16.67 per cent in 1951 to 36.17 per cent in 1981. If the population in the age group 0-4 is excluded, the percentage of the literate population would be nearly 42. Regrettably, adult education is an area which received relatively low priority in educational plans and improvement in the literacy rate has mostly been achieved through expansion of schooling facilities. Also, growth of literacy could not keep pace even with population growth as a result of which the total number of illiterates in the country increased from about 300 million in 1961 to about 440 million in 1981. Starting from the social education programme in the First Five Year Plan, different schemes were included in subsequent Plans under the rubric of adult education. In 1967-68 an effort was made to link adult education/literacy programmes with agricultural operations. This led to the Farmer's Functional Literacy Project. Conceptually, this was a sound programme, but its coverage was extremely limited. In the Fifth Plan, the need for focusing attention on illiterate youth in the economically active age-group of 15-25 was stressed and a broad-based scheme of non-formal education for adults in this age-group was launched in 1975-76. The two programmes continued simultaneously, but the total annual coverage under both of them never exceeded 500,000. Both schemes suffered from lack of effective follow-up. Hence, a large proportion of those who benefited from them again lapsed into illiteracy. This has also been the major shortcoming of programmes started by various States on their own. Of these, the Gram Shikshan Moham in Maharashtra is the best

known because of extensive coverage it achieved during the early sixties.

The National Adult Education Programme (NAEP), formulated in 1977-78 and launched on 2 October 1978, aimed at covering a population of nearly 100 million in the age-group 15-35 within a period of about 5 years. A project approach was followed in its implementation and adequate structures were also created to implement the programme. In the Sixth Plan, the scheme has become a part of the revised minimum needs programme and the targets have been reformulated. It is now hoped that the full coverage of the entire illiterate population in the age-group 15-35 might be possible by 1990.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

The number of High/Higher Secondary Schools increased from 7,228 in 1950-51 to 45,590 in 1979-80, and enrolment in classes IX to XI rose from 125 lakhs to 936 lakhs during this period. Growth of secondary education during each of the three decades of planning is shown in the table 'B' (next page).

Along with expansion of secondary education efforts were made to reorganise and strengthen education at this stage, which provides the link between elementary and higher education and also serves as a terminal point. As a result of the Mudaliar Commission's recommendations, the duration of the secondary stage was accepted as three years (IX, X and XI Classes), and multi-purpose higher secondary schools were established which also provided some vocational courses of a terminal character. The scheme ran into difficulty after some years. For this there were two reasons. The resources needed for conversion of high schools into higher secondary schools were insufficient and several States did not accept the change to a three-year secondary course followed by a three-year degree course. The Education Commission (1964-66) also did not consider 11 years (8 years elementary and 3 years secondary) to be sufficient preparation for the

TABLE—B
Growth of secondary education— institutions and enrolment

Year	No of High/Higher Secondary Schools	Enrolment in classes IX to XI (in lakhs)		
		Boys	Girls	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1950-51	7,288	10.9 (9.3)	1.6 (1.5)	12.5 (5.5)
1960-61	17,257	24.7 (17.5)	5.6 (4.3)	30.3 (11.1)
1970-71	36,738	57.3 (26.8)	21.3 (9.8)	78.6 (18.5)
1979-80	45,590	66.1 (28.7)	27.5 (12.5)	93.6 (20.8)

Note: Figures in paranthesis indicate enrolments as percentages to population in the respective age-groups

academic levels desired to be achieved at the end of the secondary stage. They, therefore, proposed the 10+2 pattern which is now the nationally accepted pattern. Establishment of a Board of Secondary Education in almost every State and examination reforms programmes initiated by them coupled with the efforts of NCERT to improve text books and curriculum, teaching methods and teacher training have contributed towards improving the quality of education at this stage.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Like secondary education, higher education also expanded rapidly after independence as may be seen from the table 'C' below.

TABLE—C
**Growth of higher education—
institutions and enrolment**

Year	No of Universities	No of affil- ated colleges	Total enrolment
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1950-51	27	695	3,62,223
1960-61	45	1,542	8,95,541
1970-71	84	3,604	19,53,700
1980-81	112	4,722	27,52,437

This high rate of growth has been due mainly to pressing social demands and the need to extend facilities to the backward regions. Since the expansion of higher education is not related to manpower needs, it has resulted in increasing the number of unemployed graduates. Scholastic achievements have also declined. The University Grants Commission was not able to check this expansion in the early stages. However, during the decade 1971-72 to 1980-81, the average annual growth rate of enrolment to higher education came down to 3.6 per cent as against 13.4 per cent during the preceding decade. An encouraging sign has been the proportionate decline in the enrolment to Arts classes as against increase in Science and Science-based courses. Faculty improvement programmes and implementation of U.G.C. pay scales to the teaching staff in universities and colleges have been significant inputs in improving the quality of teachers. Libraries and laboratories have been strengthened through development grants given by the Commission. The Commission has also helped in establishing some centres for advanced studies in selected universities for post-graduate and research work. Three new Central Universities have been established.

These are the Jawaharlal Nehru University (Delhi), the North Eastern Hill University (Shillong), and the University of Hyderabad

Besides development of universities and colleges, specific institutions/bodies like the Indian Council of Social Science Research, Indian Council of Historical Research, Indian Council of Philosophy, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, etc., have also been established to promote research in specific areas

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

With the establishment of five Indian Institutes of Technology and 14 Regional Engineering Colleges, technical education has expanded rapidly. The five IITs alone have a total capacity to train 12,129 engineers and scientists and their annual outturn is 2,731. In addition, the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, the National Institute of Foundry and Forge Technology, Ranchi, the National Institute of Training in Industrial Engineering, Bombay, and the Indian Institutes of Management at Ahmedabad, Kanpur, Calcutta and Bangalore, have made training facilities available in several areas of technology and management. The All-India Council of Technical Education is responsible for maintaining standards in technical education. To a large extent, it has succeeded in controlling the indiscriminate growth of institutions for technical education.

OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

In addition to the major areas described above, educational plans have also provided for development of physical education, games, sports and other extra-curricular programmes. The National Service Scheme is now the single largest programme for involving college and university students in community service. Started in 1969 with a small coverage of about 40,000, the scheme has now been extended to cover nearly 500,000 students. For the development of non-student youth, mainly

from the rural areas, and their involvement in community activities, the scheme of Nehru Yuvak Kendras (NYKs) was started. Rural sports, cultural and recreational programmes, adult education, vocational training for self-employment, and youth leadership training are the major activities of NYKs. The other programmes include health, moral and spiritual education, education for international understanding, social and national integration through education, mid-day meals, and special programmes for the education of girls, handicapped and socially backward communities. Programmes for socially backward communities have been receiving special attention. Separate sub-plans/component plans are being drawn up for the welfare of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURE

The total expenditure on education (from all sources) increased from Rs 114.4 crores in 1950-51 to Rs 2,104.7 crores in 1975-76. Expenditure from government sources during this period increased from Rs 78 crores to Rs 2,085 crores. Government's expenditure in 1980-81 amounted to Rs 3,746 crores. An idea of the government expenditure on education during the past decade can be had from the Table 'D' (next page).

Out of the total budgeted amounts for education by the States and Union Territories during 1980-81, 47.6 per cent was to be spent on elementary education, 31.1 on secondary education, 12.9 on university and other higher education, 3 per cent on technical education, and the rest on other educational programmes.

Plan expenditure on education has increased from Rs 153 crores in the First Plan to Rs 911 crores during the Fifth Plan. The outlay for original Fifth Plan was 1,285 crores. The Sixth Plan outlay for education is Rs 2,523.7 crores. The Table 'E' gives the breakdown of expenditure during various plan periods on different segments of the educational programme.

TABLE—D
Educational expenditure from government sources

(Rs in crores)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total expenditure by all departments</i>	<i>Expenditure by Education Department</i>	<i>Total Expenditure on education as proportion of revenue budget (%)</i>	<i>Expenditure by Education Department portion of budget (%)</i>	<i>Education budget proportion to total national income (%)</i>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1970-71	970 83	894 35	15 1	13 9	2 8
1975-76	2,085 21	1,809 11	15 7	13 6	3 4
1980-81	3,746 16	3,110 01	15 4	12 8	N A

TABLE—E
Sub-sectorwise Expenditure on Education in Five Year Plans

(Rs in crores)

<i>Sub-sector</i>	<i>First plan</i>	<i>Second plan</i>	<i>Third plan</i>	<i>Annual plans</i>	<i>Fourth plan</i>	<i>Fifth plan *</i>	<i>Sixth plan (outlay)</i>
Elementary education	85 (56)	95 (35)	201 (34)	75 (23)	239 (30)	292 (32)	905 (36)
Secondary education	20 (13)	51 (19)	103 (18)	52 (17)	140 (18)	166 (18)	420 (17)
Higher (general) education	14 (9)	48 (18)	87 (15)	77 (24)	195 (25)	204 (23)	486 (19)
Other educational programmes	14 (9)	27 (9)	66 (11)	33 (10)	94 (12)	113 (12)	351 (14)
Total General Education	133 (87)	221 (81)	457 (78)	237 (74)	668 (85)	775 (85)	2162 (86)
Technical education	20 (13)	49 (18)	125 (21)	81 (25)	106 (13)	109 (12)	278 (11)
Cultural programmes	@	3 (1)	7 (1)	4 (1)	12 (2)	27 (3)	84 (3)
Total education	153 (100)	273 (100)	589 (100)	322 (100)	786 (100)	911 (100)	2,524 (100)

Note Figures in parantheses indicate percentage to total plan expenditure

*For four years only, as the plan was terminated one year earlier

@ Included in general education

Some of the critical problems in education at the present stage of development are reviewed below

The problem of numbers: Population growth has over-strained the educational system India has the largest proportion of its

population below the age of 15 years. Therefore, schooling facilities which have been expanded almost three times at the elementary stage after independence still fall short of the total requirement and the directive in the Constitution of universal elementary education, which should have been achieved by 1960, is still a distant goal. Nearly 15 per cent of the children in the age-group 6-11 years and 60 per cent in 11-14 years age-group had yet to be enrolled at the beginning of the Sixth Plan (1980-81). The target for the Sixth Plan is to enrol 11.7 million additional children in the age-group 6-11, and 6.3 million in the age-group 11-14. Even if these targets are achieved, there would still be about 5 per cent children in the age-group 6-11 and 50 per cent in the age-group 11-14 who would still be out of the school system. This is on the assumption that the Sixth Plan targets will be fully accomplished, which is quite unlikely. Moreover, earlier projections for the growth of numbers in the school-going age-groups will also require upward revision.

The large gaps in elementary education exist in nine States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Together, these States account for 82 per cent of the non-enrolled children in the age group 6-14. There are nearly 200 districts (mostly within these States), where the enrolment ratio is markedly below the national average. Children who do not attend school belong generally to backward socio-economic groups and communities and a large proportion of them are girls.

Retention of students Out of every 100 children enrolled in Class I, 60 drop out before they complete four years at school, which is considered to be the minimum period for attaining functional literacy. These drop-out constitute nearly 50 per cent of the total numbers in the age-group 6-11. Since nearly 15 per cent children in this age-group are still not enrolled and about 50 per cent drop out before they become functionally literate, our school system is able to make effectively literate only

about 35 per cent of the children and the rest are added to the ranks of illiterate adults. This also explains the slow growth of the literacy rate.

School curriculum, teachers and physical facilities Starting from the Wardha scheme of basic education, there have been several attempts to change the school curriculum, but none of them could bring about any radical change. The curriculum still remains unrelated to the child's environment and local socio-economic conditions. Efforts to provide worthwhile work experience could bear no significant results. A large proportion of schools do not have satisfactory buildings and other physical facilities. The incentives and organisation for attracting first generation learners from economically and socially backward communities are too inadequate and do not deal with the difficulties encountered by parents in sending their children to schools. The teachers provided in the schools suffer from too many inadequacies and handicaps. Their salaries and service conditions in most States are not able to attract enough talent and enthusiasm for the profession. The rigidities of the school system, which include single point entry, sequential promotion, and full-time instruction also contribute to the drop out rate.

Liquidation of illiteracy Nearly two-thirds of India's population is still illiterate. Even in the economically most productive age-group of 15-35, the number of illiterate adults is more than 100 million. Illiteracy on such an enormous scale is a major cause of mass poverty and poor participation in educational and developmental programmes. High positive correlation between the incidence of adult illiteracy and low enrolment rate suggests that the problem of universalisation of elementary education cannot be tackled effectively unless simultaneous efforts on an adequate scale are made to eradicate illiteracy among adults and, even more so, among women. The provision of Rs 128 crores made for adult education programme under the Sixth Plan fails to reflect the urgency of the problem.

Vocationalisation of the secondary stage
The secondary stage in education has two important functions to prepare students for the university and other higher education, and to serve as a terminal basis for courses of a vocational nature, enabling young people to move into middle level jobs. Secondary schools mostly fail in performing the second role. The result is an ever-increasing reserve of unemployed matriculates whose number stood at 2.46 million at the beginning of the Sixth Plan. Indiscriminate expansion of secondary education, inadequate number of vocational schools like Industrial Training Institutes, and inadequate efforts in vocationalising the secondary curriculum are among the serious problems which call for urgent attention. Partly for want of resources and partly for lack of political will, the 10+2 pattern with a strong vocational content in the last two years stage, has not yet been effectively implemented. Although the Sixth Plan laid considerable stress on this programme, the progress so far has not been substantial enough.

Reorganisation and restructuring of university level courses. Rapid expansion of higher education after independence provided new opportunities to several groups hitherto deprived, including backward communities, and helped them in their upward social mobility. However, the expansion took place mostly in general academic courses, which accentuated the problem of educated unemployment. This is evident from the fact that there were nearly one million unemployed persons having university degrees or diplomas in 1980. The frustration generated among students due to this situation is exhibited in different forms, including campus unrest. Efforts to involve students in meaningful constructive activities are still a drop in the ocean and a large number of colleges mostly located in semi-urban and rural areas are still untouched by them. The solution to the problem lies to an extent in restructuring university level courses by introducing vocational courses and increasing the social content and enlarging employment

opportunities

Financial resources Government expenditure on education constituted nearly 15 per cent of the total budget of the States and the Centre and about 4 per cent of the national income. This is much below the level of 6 per cent accepted in the National Policy Statement. The share of education in the five year plans has been continuously falling. Starting from 7.22 per cent of the total plan outlay during the First Plan, it has come down to 2.59 per cent during the Sixth Plan. The effects are clearly visible as the educational system is languishing for want of adequate finance. The distribution of available resources within various sectors of education has also been consistently discriminated against programmes of elementary and adult education. These trends have to be reversed as speedily as possible.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

After its comprehensive study of the entire system, the Education Commission had observed

“Indian education needs a drastic reconstruction, almost a revolution. We need to bring about major improvements in the effectiveness of primary education, to introduce work experience as an integral element of general education; to vocationalise secondary education, to improve the quality of teachers at all levels and to provide teachers in sufficient strength; to liquidate illiteracy, to strengthen centres of advanced study and to strive to attain in some of our universities at least higher international standards; to lay special emphasis on the combination of teaching and research and to pay particular attention to education and research in agriculture and allied science.”

These observations of the Education Commission remain valid. The following aspects call for urgent action on an adequate scale

(i) Further expansion of the network of schooling facilities at the elementary level,

specially in the educationally backward States and in relation to the socially disadvantaged groups

(ii) Shedding the rigidities of the formal system and developing extensively non-formal education programmes to benefit those who cannot attend full-time schools. These programmes should supplement the efforts of the formal system and should prepare boys and girls for re-entry into the formal system

(iii) Making all-out efforts to wipe out adult illiteracy as soon as possible and providing adults facilities for follow-up and continuing education relevant to the economic, social and cultural needs of adults, particularly those in the productive age-group of 15-35 years

(iv) Vocationalising secondary education and introducing courses of a terminal character mostly in activities which are likely to expand

(v) Introducing meaningful work experience programmes related to the local environment at all levels in general education and relating the curriculum and text books with local and regional conditions and needs

(vi) Restructuring university level courses with a view to linking them with development and providing employment orientation. Research and higher education should lay stress on inter-disciplinary approaches and should take up as far as possible new emerging areas of knowledge relevant to national development

(vii) Removing the mismatch between higher and technical education and the employment market and planning and regulating the growth of facilities in relation to manpower needs

(viii) Providing liberal financial assistance to deserving students with limited means and those belonging to socially backward communities

(ix) Improving management in the educational system and decentralising educational planning. In most States educational administration has not been strengthened in keeping with the expansion of the system and supervision has slackened

Also, the required qualitative change in the planning and management system could not take place because arrangements to train persons in this field and develop a cadre of educational planners and administrators are grossly inadequate

The Sixth Plan strategy of educational development lays special emphasis on the above measures and the programmes proposed, if implemented in earnest, would at least provide a definite direction to future educational development. Apart from providing necessary financial inputs to achieve the proposed objectives, it would also be necessary to intensify efforts in providing such inputs as do not call for significant financial monetary provisions but are equally important for the improvement of the quality of education. Most important among them are political will and efficient management of the system

S N SARAF

M C DUBFY

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION,

The basic skills of reading, writing and counting are not only essential for taking advantage of the opportunities that development makes available but also for economic development and social change. The integration of an individual with the mainstream of national life is facilitated by his intelligent use of the information provided by the media, which enables him to transcend the spatial barriers. With education, participation in the democratic process becomes more meaningful and issues rather than personalities and caste and religious considerations become the foci for debate and discussion. The basic minimum education among the large mass of

the people is particularly significant for India at its present stage of economic development. In view of their importance for development and the economic well-being of the nation, knowledge and skill inputs need to be provided to agriculture and other rural occupations. To a large extent, these have to be provided through schools so that future farmers and artisans do not have to depend upon intermediaries for the use of improved production technologies.

Elementary education is particularly important for economic development in our context. For many years to come a large majority of the people will continue to give up further education after completing the first five or eight years of schooling. Therefore, successful implementation of development programmes in rural areas will depend upon the willing and intelligent participation and leadership of elementary school leavers. The kind of education and training that they should have must, therefore, receive serious consideration.

Even educationally, the developmental role of elementary education is significant. Research has indicated that later learning depends substantially upon learning that has already taken place. Learning is a sort of building blocks activity. Without initial learning, concept formation and acquisition of complex skills become difficult. Some forms of learning may, in fact, be impossible without earlier learning having taken place.¹ Those who advocate postponement of learning of academic subjects and skills to a stage when a child has become 'mature' tend to forget that much learning has to take place before new learning can be undertaken with optimal efficiency.²

ACHIEVEMENTS

The general neglect of mass education in India was a major failure of the colonial education policy.³ Government's limited energies were directed to the establishment of institutions of higher education in the form, for instance, of degree-awarding universities of

Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. This was done with a view to providing personnel for subordinate positions in the government. Education of the masses was left to grow by itself. Even in the first decade of the twentieth century, when Britain had acquired considerable experience of organising compulsory education, the effort to introduce it in India was defeated by official opposition.⁴

Sustained effort for the promotion of primary education commenced with the inauguration of the Constitution in 1950. Although the goal of free, universal and compulsory education could not be accomplished within the stipulated period of ten years, substantial progress has been made in the provision of educational facilities. This is indicated by increases that have taken place in the number of institutions, enrolment, teachers, expenditure incurred, etc.

Enrolment in elementary schools provides an index of the progress that has been made in the provision of educational facilities. Table 'A' (next page) sums up the position in this regard.⁵

Enrolment at the elementary stage has grown nearly fourfold in classes I-V and about sixfold in classes VI-VIII. The rate of increase has been more substantial in the case of girls.

INSTITUTIONS AND TEACHERS

The number of primary and middle schools more than doubled between 1951 and 1978, their number increasing from 2.23 lakhs in 1951 to 5.87 lakhs in 1978. The number of teachers in these schools increased during this period from 6.23 lakhs to 21.02 lakhs. Increase in the number of teachers in elementary schools has been at a much faster rate than the establishment of schools indicating expansion of existing institutions as well as establishment of new institutions. Women have increasingly taken to the teaching profession and their percentage to the total number of elementary school teachers has increased from 13.7 in 1951 to about 28 in 1978.

There has been steady improvement in the academic qualifications and professional

TABLE—A
Progress of enrolment at the elementary state

Age group/Classes	Enrolment (in lakhs) 1950-51	1979-80 (Estimated)	Percentage of the age group population	
			1950-51	1979-80
6-10/I-V				
Boys	138	438	60	100
Girls	54	272	25	66
Total	192	710	43	84
11-13/VI-VIII				
Boys	26	130	21	52
Girls	5	65	5	28
Total	31	195	13	40
6-13/I-VIII				
Boys	164	587	46	86
Girls	59	337	18	52
Total	223	924	32	69

experience of teachers. There has been considerable progress in respect of both between 1951 and 1971, being the period for which information is presently available.⁶ The percentage of trained teachers increased during this period from 59 to 86 in primary schools and from 53 to 87 in middle schools. As regards academic qualifications, the percentage of teachers with education equivalent to high/higher secondary school or more increased from 14.5 in 1951 to 62.8 in 1976, partly due to the oversupply of graduates and partly because of improvements in salary scales and service conditions inducing more qualified candidates to seek teaching positions in elementary schools.

EXPENDITURE

Although in absolute figures the funds provided for elementary education have substantially increased, the share of elementary education in the total expenditure on education has decreased slightly over the years, from 38.7 per cent in 1951 to 37.4 per cent in 1976.⁷ This is particularly noticeable in respect of primary schools where the expenditure has decreased from 32 per cent to 21.2 per cent.

The trend in plan allocations for elementary education is shown in Table 'B' below.⁸

The low priority given to elementary education is particularly indicated by the change that has taken place in the allocation

TABLE—B
Plan outlays/expenditures on elementary education

Plan	Total allocation on Education	(Rs in crores) Elementary education	Per cent on elementary education
First plan (1951-56) expenditure	153	85	55.6
Second plan (1956-61) expenditure	273	95	34.8
Third plan (1961-66) expenditure	589	178	30.2
Annual plans (1966-69) expenditure	322	65	20.2
Fourth plan (1969-74) expenditure	823	235	28.6
Fifth plan (1974-79) a) draft outlay	1,726	743	43.6
b) final expenditure	1,285	410	31.9
Sixth plan (1980-85) outlay	2,524	934	37.0

for it in the Fifth Five Year Plan. The Draft Plan proposed Rs. 743 crores for elementary education within the total allocation of Rs 1,726 crores for education. In the final version of the Fifth Plan, while the total outlay for education was reduced to Rs 1,285 crores or by Rs 441 crores, the outlay for elementary education was reduced to Rs 410 crores or by Rs 333 crores. In other words, out of the total reduction of Rs 441 crores, elementary education accounted for 76 percent.

The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) has provided for elementary education Rs 934 crores or about 37 percent of the total outlay of Rs 2,524 crores for education. If past experience is any guide, the expenditure that will be incurred on education will be substantially lower than provided for in the plan, more so especially in the case of elementary education.

PROBLEMS

In spite of substantial progress recorded over the last three decades, the realisation of the constitutional directive continues to remain a distant goal. Because of the large drop out, the contribution of elementary education to the eradication of illiteracy has not been commensurate with the investments that have been made in this sector. The present day curriculum is generally regarded as irrelevant to societal needs. The physical facilities at elementary schools are unsatisfactory. The teaching and learning processes are carried out ineffectively.

Despite the establishment of a large number of institutions, large areas continue to be without elementary schools. The fourth all-India education survey has, for instance, shown that in 1978, out of 9.65 lakh habitations, 1.91 lakh or about 20 per cent had no primary school/section within the habitation or within a walking distance of 1 km. In the case of middle schools, the position was still worse, 3.20 lakh habitations or more than 34 per cent had no school/section within

the habitation or within a walking distance of 3 kilometres.⁹ Were these criteria to be lowered—taking into consideration the tender age of children, difficult terrain, natural barriers, difficult weather conditions, etc.—the position in regard to the availability of schools within easy reach would certainly be much more unsatisfactory.

However, a large proportion of habitations without schooling facilities have so sparse a population as to make the establishment of a school economically non-viable. For instance, of the 1.91 lakh habitations without primary schooling facility within easy reach, 84,000 or 44 per cent had a population of less than 300 on an average, similarly, of the 3.20 lakh habitations without middle school facility, 2.54 lakh or about 79 per cent had an average population of less than 500.

Considerable variation exists among the States in the access of children to primary and middle school education. An analysis of data for 15 States indicates that the percentage of rural habitations without primary schools within a walking distance of 1.5 km varied from 4 in Punjab to 48 in Himachal Pradesh. In the case of middle schools, the variation of habitations without a school within the habitation or a distance of 5 km was from 9 per cent in Punjab to 38 per cent in Madhya Pradesh.¹⁰

Sparseness of population is a major reason for non-availability of schooling facility within easy reach, however, some non-educational factors may result in wrong location of schools. For instance, the fourth education survey (1978) has indicated that quite a substantial proportion of habitations with a population of 300/500 or more—considered to be satisfactory for establishing economically viable primary/middle schools—did not have an institution within the habitation or within a walking distance of 1 km/3 km.

Inter-state disparity also exists in respect of the proportion of children already enrolled in schools. While for the country as a whole educational facilities were available in classes

I-V in 1979-80 for 84 per cent of children in the age-group 6-11, in a number of States like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tripura, etc., this percentage was substantially lower. Similar variations existed in the case of enrolment in classes VI-VIII. In 1979-80, almost all the non-enrolled children of the age group 6-11 (352 lakhs out of 406 lakhs) were concentrated in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Most of the non-attending children were girls.

Disparities within a State are often more acute than among States. Take, for instance, the district-wise variations in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in the proportion of children enrolled in elementary schools. In Madhya Pradesh, for instance, the percentage of children of the age group 6-11 varied in 1975 from 32.3 in Sagar to 89.7 in Indore. Similarly, this percentage in respect to children of the age-group 11-14 varied from 10.6 in Sagar to 50.9 in Indore. In Rajasthan, in Barmer district, only 13.2 per cent of girls in the age group 6-11 and 3.7 per cent in the age group 11-14 were enrolled in 1977 while, for the State as a whole, these percentages were 29.4 and 11 respectively.¹¹

For various reasons all sections of the population are not able to take advantage of educational opportunities in equal measure. For instance, in the case of girls, social prejudices intervene leading to their premature withdrawal from schools. While certain communities, like scheduled tribes, live in isolated areas where establishment of educational institutions presents considerable difficulty, others like scheduled castes suffer from social handicaps which prevent them from taking advantage of the already established facilities. In 1978, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes accounted for 14.6 per cent and 6.3 per cent respectively at the primary stage and 10.6 per cent and 3.6 per cent at the middle school stage. Although these

disparities exist, firm data are not available to determine their extent.

In a system which seeks to provide equal access, the proportion of various communities in school enrolment should roughly be the same as their proportion to the total population. This is not true in respect of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward classes at the elementary stage and even more at the middle school stage. While they constituted respectively 15 per cent and 7 per cent of the total population in 1971, their share in middle school stage enrolment was 10.6 per cent and 3.6 per cent respectively in 1978.

Non-availability of schooling facilities within easy reach is one of the major reasons why enrolment of children belonging to these communities is low. The fourth education survey indicated 77.3 per cent of the habitations with population of 300 or more being served by a primary school/section within the habitation. In the case of habitations predominantly populated by scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the percentage was 66.9 and 77.8 respectively.¹²

Students taking more than the required period to complete a grade and/or their dropping out of the system without obtaining minimum basic education have been the two major deficiencies of elementary education, reducing its effectiveness to contribute to the eradication of illiteracy. Overall calculations of dropout rates have indicated that out of 100 students entering grade I, only 40 reach grade V and only 25 grade VIII. These calculations, however, tend to magnify the dropout rates because they do not take into account the inflation in enrolment of grades that takes place because of the large number of children repeating them. Some carefully conducted studies have indicated that repetition of grades (stagnation) is as serious as is the premature withdrawal of children from schools.¹³

Stagnation is quite a serious problem. The major reasons for it are educational, especially ill-equipped schools, over-crowded class-

rooms, heterogeneity in the age composition of children due to indiscriminate admissions, teachers ill-equipped to help the smooth transition of the child from the informal atmosphere of the home to the formal atmosphere of the school, etc. Therefore, it should be easier to think of and implement remedial measures to reduce the incidence of stagnation. This may not be the case with wastage where socio-economic reasons are of primary importance and may not be easily managed on their own by education planners and administrators. The juxtaposition of wastage and stagnation has tended to diminish the effort to deal with stagnation.

Expansion of educational facilities has generally tended to take the form of appointment of teachers, little attention has consequently been given to the provision of basic physical facilities which are essential for an efficient and effective teaching process. Recent statistics on school buildings are provided by the fourth education survey. According to it, 40 per cent of existing primary schools were housed in kutcha, thatched huts or were being run in the open, 34 per cent primary schools had no mats or furniture for children to sit on; 39 per cent had no blackboards and 60 per cent had no drinking water facilities.¹⁴

Unemployment among teachers has emerged as a major problem in recent years. In the Third Plan, a large number of teacher training institutions came to be established because of the increased demand for teachers on account of the massive programme of expanding educational provisions. In no State, however, were training facilities created on the basis of any long or short term projection of requirements of teachers. The demand for teachers has now tapered off, partly because the needs of expansion are not as large as they were earlier, and partly because States are finding it difficult to provide large allocations for elementary education such as would allow them to embark upon a sizable programme for establishing new primary and middle schools.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The need for expansion of elementary education will no doubt continue till the pertinent Directive Principle of the Constitution (Article 45) is fully realised. The time has probably come when greater emphasis should be given to the consolidation and improvement of elementary education. The type and quality of education and training are more important for economic development and social modernisation than merely the numbers receiving school education. Over the last three decades of planning, resources and energy have by and large been concentrated on increasing enrolments and very little attention has been given to such intangibles of education as curricular reorientation, effective instruction, suitable consultancy and organisational arrangements which are really significant if elementary education is to play the vital role expected of it in economic and social development.

Provision of educational facilities will continue to be a major goal in elementary education. The three facets of this programme are: (a) the universal provision of facilities, (b) ensuring that every child in the age group 6-14 years is enrolled, and (c) retention of children for the full period of compulsory education. In the past, we have tended to emphasise the first two elements, often at the cost of the third.

The problem presented by sparsely populated areas has been mentioned earlier. However, while sparseness of population is a major factor which makes the establishment of a school in a habitation economically nonviable, it cannot be an argument for denying educational opportunity to children living there. An alternative strategy has to be developed and implemented to bring children living in sparsely populated areas within the fold of education. Among others, the components of this strategy may include the establishment of sub-schools (as in Madhya Pradesh) maintained by a locally available educated person on payment of a small honorarium, with the sub-school attached to a

nearby institution for academic guidance, the use of peripatetic teachers who may be asked to teach a group of students in two habitations on the basis of a three day week, setting up of mobile schools (as in Jammu and Kashmir) where the teacher moves, along with equipment and instructional materials, with the nomadic population, provision of education on a part-time basis, the use of radio, television and postal courses for children who have mastered the basic skill to undertake self learning, and establishment of *Ashram* schools where education and residence are subsidised from the public exchequer

In appointing teachers for new schools, it will be necessary to ensure that teachers who are already in service are fully utilised. Data from a number of States indicate that while some areas are without teachers, in others there is oversupply, generally, backward and rural areas remain without teachers for long stretches of time. In a situation where there is considerable unemployment among teachers, their unwillingness to go to schools located in the interior cannot be allowed to jeopardise the educational interests of children. Some firmness on the part of the administrative and political leadership is required. Adoption of recruitment procedures which ensure the selection of teachers from areas where their services are required would help ensure availability of teachers in backward areas. If the average daily attendance, rather than enrolment which is generally inflated, were accepted as the criterion for appointment of teachers, much of the new enrolment could be taken care of by teachers who are already in service. The resources so freed could be deployed for enhancing the productivity of elementary schools.

The removal of disparity, between and within States which seems to have become accentuated over the years, is largely dependent upon the efforts that the States themselves make. In the case of many States, which are educationally backward, the average tax effort and expenditure on elementary education is not proportionate to the State

income, which is a more valid criterion for measuring the ability of the States to support the development effort.¹⁵

Low enrolments are not a function only of non-availability of financial resources. If, for instance, they are due to poverty or lack of appreciation of the value of education and social prejudice, augmentation of financial investments will be of marginal value. What is needed is to identify the problem areas where elementary education has not made headway and develop appropriate strategies and programmes.

Although their ineffectiveness is quite well-known, single teacher schools will continue to be an important institutional means to provide education in habitations not yet covered. With the existing resource constraints, provision of more than one teacher in a primary school with less than the desirable enrolment (say 30 to 35 children) will continue to be a distant goal. In the present planning environment where, while university departments with almost one to one faculty-student ratio may be tolerated, a teacher-pupil ratio of less than 1:40 in a primary school will continue to be frowned upon.

Since we cannot yet do without single-teacher schools, appropriate technologies to make them more efficient and effective instruments of education have to be thought of. The teachers of these schools need to be trained in such techniques as development of non-graded curricula, making children undertake self-learning, streaming of students according to ability and attainment, organisation of schools in two shifts, etc. Self-learning packages and radio lessons can also be developed to meet the specific needs of students in single teacher schools.

Three approaches are called for in bringing an increasing number of children of scheduled tribes and scheduled castes to school. Firstly, although for some tribal communities living in sparsely populated areas, the establishment of an elementary school may not be justified on economic criteria, for the integration of these

communities with the mainstream of national life, considerations other than formal economic rationality should prevail. In addition, the programme of *Ashram* schools should be expanded. Secondly, efforts should be made to augment the supply of teachers in tribal areas firstly by allowing better pay scales and adequate housing facilities to teachers who are willing to work in these areas and, as a long term measure, by educating tribal boys and girls at State cost on the condition that they will take up teaching in tribal areas. Lastly, education provided in tribal institutions should be renewed so that it is seen by tribals as being relevant to their traditions and culture.

A number of reasons account for non-enrolment of children—the perception of parents that education available in schools is of little utility; poverty which compels children to participate in economic activities; poor nourishment; lack of clothing and text books; social prejudices which operate in the case of girls and the scheduled castes; the need to retain girls at home for looking after small children while parents are engaged in economic activities, and so on. These can be tackled by educational authorities. Massive adult education campaigns, with the support of women's organisations and other voluntary agencies, aimed at persuading parents to send children to schools will help. Similarly, provision of incentives in the form of mid-day meals, free text books, stationery, clothing and attendance scholarships, curricular reform to make education more relevant to neighbourhood needs, residential quarters for women teachers to promote their availability in rural areas, attachment of *Balwadis*, creches and play centres to primary schools to free girls from domestic chores, regulation of vacations in relation to seasonal requirements of occupations and so on, will also help counteract the effects of poverty and social prejudices.

Retention of children in school for a sufficiently long time to attain a basic minimum level of education and skill is a

serious problem requiring urgent consideration. There has been little change in the dropout rates; in fact, with increasing enrolments, the magnitude of dropouts has increased. A major effort, therefore, needs to be made in enhancing the holding power of the school. Non-graded teaching, automatic promotions, making the age composition of the grades homogeneous by insisting on admitting children at the age of 6, are some of the measures which will no doubt help.

Other areas where considerable work requires to be done can also be identified. Firstly, considerably higher priority must be given in the allocation of resources to improvement of physical facilities in schools. With the conditions that obtain at present, the surprising thing is not that a sizable number drops out but that a sufficiently large number of children still stay on in elementary schools.

Secondly, teacher preparation requires serious thought. Pre-service and in-service training must, in particular, aim at developing among teachers the competence to deal with problems faced by children on their first admission and those of the single-teacher schools. Considering that 60 per cent of the children of primary schools drop out between classes I to III when they may not be economically very helpful to the household, teachers must be specifically prepared for and deal with the problems that a child encounters in making the transition from the informal atmosphere of the home to the formal atmosphere of the school.

Thirdly, curricular reorientation, to make education more relevant to the needs of the neighbourhood, have to be undertaken with a sense of urgency. It is only when parents perceive education to be useful that they will be motivated to send their children to schools, and keep them there for a sufficiently long time. An essential ingredient of the elementary school curriculum should be socially useful productive work. Apart from concretising learning, the objective in introducing it is to provide knowledge and skills that will help

future farmers and artisans to improve the productivity of various occupations and also to take up economic activities which will diversify the economy of the community. The efforts made by the NCERT in developing teachers' competence to develop locally specific curriculum and instructional materials for formal and the non-formal system need augmentation and wider application by State Governments.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Part-time short duration classes for children who cannot, for various reasons, attend schools during regular hours, are being advocated as an alternative means of realising the constitutional directive. As a major strategy to provide education to the non-attending children, part-time education was emphasised in the draft Fifth Plan. Part-time classes were visualized as being of two types: continuation classes for children who, having completed five years of primary school, would like to continue education on a part-time basis, and literacy classes for those who had either never been to a school or had dropped out so early (say in class I and II) as not to have attained permanent literacy. Although a target of enrolling 70 to 80 lakh children in these classes during 1974-79 was proposed, except for some *ad hoc* experimental work in a few States, no systematic effort was made to develop part-time education as a major strategy to universalise elementary education.

There is renewed interest in part-time education (now christened non-formal education). The Interim Report of the Working Group on Universalisation of Elementary Education recommended non-formal education to be a major strategy to bring within the fold of education non-enrolled children and also those who drop out prematurely from elementary schools. The basic strategy for universalisation of elementary education advocated was that "every child shall continue to learn in the age-group 6-14 on a full time basis, if possible, and

on part-time basis, if necessary"¹⁶ The States have, however, still to become fully involved in developing a viable and effective programme of non-formal education although the Ministry of Education and Culture provides assistance for the establishment of non-formal education centres.

A number of problems are associated with the organisation of part-time non-formal education. Critical evaluation of the work done so far indicates that "while the basic formulation, particularly in regard to non-attendance and premature withdrawal is sound, the proposal is faulty in many of its assumptions and quite nebulous in operational details"¹⁷ Some of the assumptions which underlie the advocacy of non-formal education as a strategy for universalisation are discussed below.

The estimates of dropouts (assuming that, out of every 100 children who enrol in class 1,40 reach class V and 25 class VIII) are not correct, they fail to distinguish the incidence of stagnation from that of wastage. The two need to be considered separately because, as mentioned earlier, while dropout takes place due to economic reasons over which education authorities have limited control, the incidence of stagnation can be substantially reduced through educational manipulation.

The question of equating education received in the non-formal education centres with that of the formal system is yet to be fully settled. There is a real danger, as happened in the case of basic education, that two parallel systems of education will come into existence—one patronised by the well-to-do and the other for the economically handicapped and the socially under-privileged.

Part-time education will, by necessity, have to be limited to the 'essentials'. The curriculum of non-formal education centres is being condensed so that the first five years' education can be given in two years. This may lead to serious gaps in the education of those who attend non-formal education centres which no amount of educational enrichment at a later

stage can remove. Such deficiency in educational preparation may adversely affect the chances of educational advancement of those very groups for whom education may be the only means for upward mobility.

An effective organisation of non-formal education centres, where the situation is highly unstructured, clientele non-homogeneous in age, attainments and motivations and the basic tasks ill-defined, will depend largely on the type of teachers that are recruited for them. Entrusting of education in these centres to existing teachers whose record of work in full-time schools is none too bright, would hardly help, particularly if these teachers are expected to work on the basis of a paltry remuneration.

The organisation of non-formal education on grounds of reducing costs of elementary education, as is often advocated, may mean that its development as a major strategy to promote education and bring about radical changes in the total education system, would often be subjected to considerations of economising expenditures. Non-formal education must receive a fair deal in financial investments, particularly because it is expected to meet the needs of the hard core of the poor and the under-privileged.

IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY

Although the needs of expansion will continue to receive importance, a stage has come when more attention needs to be given to improving the productivity of elementary schools by enhancing their holding power. Improvements in the quality of education need not depend on financial resources. What is needed is to identify programmes which, while requiring marginal financial investments, have nevertheless a multiplier effect. One can easily identify five major activities which fulfil these criteria: curricular change, upgradation of competence of teachers, effective administration and supervision, mechanisms for inter-institutional support and promotion of innovation. These are discussed briefly in the following paragraphs.

Curricular Reform: Curricular reorientation has basically two dimensions—the personal and the social. While the former requires the provision of an atmosphere and programmes in school which ensure the full physical and mental development of the child, the latter demands that the education provided should be relevant to social needs in terms, for instance, of knowledge and skills which contribute to productivity, strengthen democracy and national integration, hasten the process of modernization, and build the character of people by cultivating in them social, moral and spiritual values.

The introduction of socially useful productive work as an integral part of the elementary school curriculum is of particular significance. The elementary school must be developed as a focal institution for increasing the productivity of various economic activities and also help in diversifying the occupational life of the community. Socially useful productive work must be forward looking and must aim at promoting useful skills in the rural areas. To organise it meaningfully, the school will need the help and guidance of the extension wings of various development departments. In fact, it would be desirable if these agencies could develop the elementary school, which provides the principal institutional infrastructure in many rural areas, as the focal institution for spreading in the country the knowledge of improved technologies of production.

Teacher Competence: A sizable number of teachers of elementary schools are both under-qualified and untrained. The school teacher being the kingpin in the teaching-learning process, qualitative improvement of elementary education can be brought about by upgrading his competence. The surplus availability of both trained teachers and high school and college graduates in almost all the States provides an opportunity for making a more discriminating selection and recruitment of teachers. While such a policy can be adopted with regard to the new teachers, efforts have to be made to improve the

teaching competence of teachers who are already in the system. A massive but well organised programme of inservice training is required. The State Institutes of Education/State Councils of Educational Research and Training which have been in existence for many years provide a useful mechanism for this purpose. Their structure and functions need to be made into more effective instruments for bringing about improvements in elementary education. The move to integrate various specific purpose institutions into an all embracing organisation like the State Council of Educational Research and Training, so that their research, training and extension inputs can be provided to the schools system in an integrated manner, is welcome. This would not only enhance the effect of these inputs, but would also allow the National Council of Educational Research and Training to provide its expert services to the States in a more meaningful manner.

A major means of upgrading the knowledge and skills of existing teachers which is yet to be tapped in a meaningful way is the radio and, wherever possible, the television. In collaboration with radio and television stations, group discussions and broadcasts on topics which are relevant to school teaching can be organised. A useful pattern for such activity is provided by the radio rural farm forums. Similar radio forums can be set up for teachers of elementary schools.

Pre-service training of teachers also requires substantial reform. The National Council for Teacher Education has suggested in its curriculum framework some significant changes. Apart from increasing the duration of training, it would be worthwhile to consider two main directions for improving teacher education—the organisation of teacher education on the basis of cycles of initial exposure to theory underlying teacher education, internship in schools and further education where teachers bring to the institutions their experience of school teaching, and the development of comprehensive teacher education institutions to break the isolation

that exists between training institutions of different categories.

Strengthening of Administration and Supervision The ultimate responsibility for implementing educational programmes rests with the administration, particularly at the district and block levels. The strengthening of administration has not been commensurate with the educational expansion that has taken place, more so at district and block levels. Procedures have also remained by and large unchanged. The nature of administrative tasks has undergone considerable change over the years—the emphasis on inspection and supervision has to be replaced by that on consultation and guidance, support of the community for schools has to be generated in a big way, district and local officers have to work closely with locally elected representative bodies, and many of the programmes of improvement have to be undertaken on the basis of human effort and in spite of the paucity of resources. Action for administrative strengthening is required in many directions—delegation of decision making authority to districts and blocks, change in recruitment and selection of administrators, development of administrative structures for planning, project formulation and monitoring, creation of units for collection, compilation analysis and dissemination of information, and upgrading of the competence of existing administrators and supervisors.

Community involvement in the efficient running of elementary schools seems to be inescapable even though the association of Panchayati Raj institutions with the administration of elementary education may not have been an unmixed blessing. The association of these institutions and other organisations that the community may constitute for elementary education is necessary. It is only the local community which can ensure that teachers perform educational functions efficiently and students attend schools regularly.

School Complexes The implementation of the idea of school complexes recommended by

the Education Commission can help in improving the supervision of elementary schools. Teachers in these schools can receive guidance from headmasters and other teachers of the neighbouring middle and secondary schools. The idea is to group various types of schools in an area and integrate their working with one another. In the first tier, each middle school will be integrally linked with a number of adjoining primary schools. The headmaster of the middle school will organise extension services for teachers in primary schools as well as supervise their work. In the next tier, each such 'complex' will be integrally linked with a secondary school in the area and the headmaster of the latter will provide guidance to all the schools in the area. Similarly, secondary schools can be linked to a college for academic guidance and improvement.

Apart from breaking down the isolation that exists among various types of schools, the school complex will enable the department to delegate many of its powers, help in rationalising the provision of equipment and materials by extending the access of all schools to equipment and materials of a central school, help in economising on expenditure and generally provide a nucleus for improving school instruction. The committee of headmasters, which may be set up in each school complex, can be used as the basic unit for the purposes of planning the educational advancement of the area.

Promotion of Innovation: There is need for building mechanisms whereby innovative ideas and practices can be experimented within actual school situations, perfected and passed on for general adoption in the school system. The draft Fifth Five Year Plan had proposed the development of some of the existing elementary schools as experimental institutions. It was visualised that these experimental institutions will be linked to teacher training institutions and, through them, to State Councils for Education Research and Training or State Institutes of Education and to the National Council for Educational Research and Training. A belt of

experimental schools would be adopted by teacher training institutions for academic guidance. With marginal additional inputs the schools would be enabled to identify innovative ideas and practices and experiment with them. After the new practices had been successfully tried out, each experimental school would, in its turn, assist 10 to 15 schools in its neighbourhood.

RESOURCES FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

In view of the developmental role that it must perform in bringing about socio-economic change in rural areas, elementary education must receive a larger share in the allocation of financial resources. Recognising that the number of elementary schools is so large that even a modest increment in per capita expenditure leads to financial implications of considerable magnitude, it would be difficult to meet these increments in expenditure only from the public exchequer. The burden has, therefore, to be shared to some extent by local communities.

State Governments can increase the allocation of resources in a number of ways—meeting the entire cost of teachers salaries, increasing the amount of admissible percentage of grant-in-aid to privately managed institutions, providing in their budget increased amounts for educational grants to local bodies, increasing the matching contribution of the State; or augmenting the resources of local bodies by transferring to them additional sources of taxation.

Even when allocations have been made in the State plans, there has been a tendency to divert resources from elementary education to other sectors of education or to other development activities, as the review of the experience of the Fifth Plan has shown. The earmarking of Central assistance which was resorted to in order to prevent such diversions has not helped because reduction in Central assistance in proportion to shortfall in expenditure on elementary education is so small as not to bother the State government.

which would prefer to retain discretion and forego small amounts of central assistance. In view of this it may be desirable to provide some outlays in the Central plan for assisting States, particularly those which are educationally backward. A beginning in this direction has been made and an outlay of Rs 25 crores provided for in the Central sector in the Sixth Plan (1980-85) for assisting educationally backward States for establishing non-formal education centres for children in the age-group 6-14.

Local communities and representative institutions of people like Panchayats should increasingly share expenditure incurred on the development of elementary education. The State can, however, play the role of stimulating local taxation for local purposes, for instance, by assuring communities that while the government's existing contribution to elementary education will not be reduced, additional amounts would be provided to local bodies if they increase local taxation. Local communities can be encouraged to contribute to the establishment of a school fund from which simple and immediate needs of the school can be met. Local communities have in the past contributed toward the construction and maintenance of school buildings in the form of land, labour and materials. This practice can still be encouraged. The charging of development fees for specific purposes is a source which is being tapped in many States, this practice needs to become universal. There are other areas where the help of local communities would be essential, for instance, the organisation of work experience for students can take place more effectively if students are allowed to participate in work in local farms and local workshops under the supervision of local farmers and artisans.

T N DHAR

NOTES

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EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

The national employment service in India is commonly understood to be the network of employment exchanges spread over the country

The evolution of employment service can be traced from the early twenties. The Unemployment Convention of I L O (1919), which provided the basis for establishment of a system of free public employment service, was ratified by the Government of India. Although the question of providing employment service was also considered by various Commissions and Committees set up by the Government of India, the establishment of this service could not come through for one reason or another until 1940. National Employment Service Labour Tribunals were set up to implement the National Service (Technical Personnel) Ordinance in the year 1940. These were intended to assume gradually the role of employment exchanges for technical personnel. The Tribunals were empowered to compel employers to give up an employee, to force the employee to take up employment in the national service, and to fix wages and terms of their services. They were thus distinctly different from the present-day employment exchanges.

As the second world war proceeded, the need was felt for a service to deal with the placement of skilled and unskilled workers who would face unemployment on cessation of hostilities. The first employment exchanges for skilled and unskilled personnel were set up under the aegis of these Tribunals since they had gained considerable experience in organising technical training schemes for providing skilled technical personnel for the armed forces. During 1943-44, eight employment exchanges were set up. These were controlled and supervised by the National Service Labour Tribunal till 1945. Later, the Government of India decided that the resettlement of ex-service personnel should be a civilian responsibility. The emphasis shifted

from mere regulation of the employment market to the rehabilitation of demobilised persons. After the partition of the country in 1947, employment exchanges were called upon to handle the resettlement of displaced persons. Thus, the employment exchanges which were originally set up to cater to the rehabilitation of demobilised service personnel, started assisting the resettlement of displaced persons. In 1948, employment exchanges were thrown open to all employment seekers alike. At the beginning of the First Five Year Plan, there were 123 employment exchanges in the country.

In 1952, the Government of India set up a Training and Employment Service Committee (Shiva Rao Committee) which made recommendations for the reorganisation of the service. The functional activities of the service were expanded to cover programmes of occupational information and research, vocational guidance and employment counselling, and collection of employment market information. The administration of employment exchanges was transferred to State Governments in 1956 for ensuring their greater involvement in various programmes of the employment service. Equally significant is the enactment of the Employment Exchanges (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies) Act, 1959, which made it compulsory for certain categories of employers to notify their vacancies to the employment exchanges. Convention number 88 of the International Labour Organisation relating to the organisation of the employment service was ratified by the Government of India in June 1959.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The Central set up, comprising the Directorate General of Employment and Training, functions under the Ministry of Labour. The responsibilities of the Government of India centre around evolving national policies, standards and procedures to be followed by the employment service in the States, planning and formulation of

programmes in consonance with the agreed policies, training of employment service personnel and co-ordination and evaluation of the services

The State Governments are at present in full administrative and financial control of their employment services. There were 638 employment exchanges as at the end of 1980. These included

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| (a) district/sub-regional employment exchanges | 516 |
| (b) university employment information guidance bureau | 71 |
| (c) project exchanges | 10 |
| (d) colliery employment exchanges | 7 |
| (e) special employment exchanges for the handicapped, one each in Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Hyderabad, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chandigarh (Punjab), Kanpur, Trivandrum, Jabalpur, Patna, Chandigarh (Haryana), Jaipur, Bhubaneswar, Simla, Gauhati and Agartala | 18 |
| (f) professional and executive offices | 15 |
| (g) plantation exchange | 1 |

638

To render employment assistance to employment seekers in rural areas, Employment Information Assistance Bureaux were set up in different States and these function in the rural areas as part of the employment service. The number of these Bureaux functioning at the end of December 1980 was 257.

The Government of India set up in 1958 a tripartite committee known as the Central Committee on Employment with representatives from State Governments, employers and workers organisations, Members of Parliament and economists. The Committee advises the Ministry of Labour on problems relating to employment, creation of

employment opportunities and the working of the national employment service. The Committee examines employment and unemployment trends both in urban and rural areas. The government have since reviewed the functions of this Committee in the context of current priorities in the field of employment and decided, through a resolution dated 27 December 1980, to set up a new Central Committee on Employment under the Chairmanship of the Minister for Labour to advise the Ministry of Labour on problems relating to employment.

LEGISLATION

The Employment Exchanges (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies) Act, 1959, has been implemented in all States/Union Territories except in Sikkim, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Arunachal Pradesh. Under the Act, all employers in the public sector and those employing 25 or more persons to work for remuneration in the private sector are required to notify vacancies to the prescribed employment exchanges on a compulsory basis. To enforce the provisions effectively, 14 States and Union Territories have established enforcement machineries.

When the Act became operative in 1960, it covered about 55,800 establishments employing nearly 95 lakh persons. There has been a marked increase thereafter. At the end of March 1980, the Act covered 143 lakh establishments employing about 2.21 crore persons. Of these, 0.40 lakh establishments were in the private sector and employed about 67.6 lakh persons.

The Act makes it possible to pool together information regarding employment trends, manpower demands and occupational shortages which is essential for manpower planning. It imposes two main obligations on employers. Before they are filled up, vacancies are required to be notified in a prescribed form to the appropriate employment exchanges. Vacancies relating to employment in unskilled office work, domestic service, agriculture,

vacancies of less than three months' duration and those carrying a remuneration less than Rs 60 per month are exempted. The Act also does not apply to vacancies in any employment connected with the staff of Parliament, vacancies proposed to be filled by promotion or absorption of surplus staff, and those for which recruitment is to be made through the result of any examination conducted or interview held by any independent agency such as the Union or State Public Service Commissions. Employers are required to submit two returns to employment exchanges—one quarterly (ER-I) and the other once in two years (ER-II-occupational pattern return).

During 1979-80 the number of vacancies notified to employment exchanges by public and private sector establishments was 8.62 lakhs as compared to 8.17 lakhs during 1978-79. As regards submission of returns, the response from the private and public sector was respectively 81.3 per cent and 85.8 per cent for the quarter ending in March 1979.

REGISTRATION FOR EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Citizens of India residing in the country are eligible for registration at employment exchanges for employment assistance. Subjects of Nepal, Bhutan and persons of Indian origin who have migrated from Pakistan, Burma, Sri Lanka and the East African countries of Kenya, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania with the intention of permanently settling down in India, are also eligible for registration. Tibetan refugees who came over to India before 1 January 1962 with the intention of permanently settling down in India are also eligible for registration. Other foreign nationals resident in India can also be registered provided there is no prohibition against their employment under the local laws and regulations or other orders sanctioning their residence in this country.

Registrants are required to renew their registration periodically. The period of renewal is one year for all categories of applicants. The

renewal procedure ensures that the names of persons who no longer need employment assistance are removed and do not unnecessarily inflate the live register.

The number of job seekers on the live registers of employment exchanges has shown an upward trend and rose from 143.34 lakhs on 31 December 1979 to 162 lakhs on 31 December 1980. This included 23.45 lakh women job seekers. The composition of job seekers by categories on 30 June 1980 was as under:

Educated (matriculates and above)	76.62 lakhs
Scheduled castes	17.24 lakhs
Scheduled tribes	4.48 lakhs
Ex-servicemen	1.63 lakhs

Earlier, there were arrangements at all employment exchanges for the registration and placement of highly qualified applicants. A separate section dealt with highly qualified applicants in the exchanges. Due to the reluctance of highly qualified persons to register at employment exchanges, these arrangements did not work satisfactorily. Accordingly, in July 1962, it was decided to reorganise the machinery for the registration and placement of highly qualified persons. As a result, Professional and Executive Employment Offices have been set up at the headquarters of the State Directorates of Employment.

Registration of highly qualified persons is effected by three agencies:

- (i) National Register Unit of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research,
- (ii) University Employment Information and Guidance Bureaux,
- (iii) Professional and Executive Employment Offices of the National Employment Service.

The National Register Unit of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is registering scientists and technical personnel returning from abroad and persons holding a doctorate in science or a Master's Degree in engineering.

technology, medicines, agriculture, veterinary sciences, home sciences, etc

Professional and Executive Employment Offices have already been established in 15 States/Union Territories at the State Directorates of Employment. In the matter of registration and circulation of vacancies, there is close coordination between the Professional and Executive Employment Offices and the University Employment Information and Guidance Bureaux.

The functions of the Professional and Executive Employment Offices are

- (a) registration and placement of highly qualified applicants,
- (b) coordination of the registration and placement work of university employment information and guidance bureaux within a State, and
- (c) maintenance of liaison with large employers and promotion of employment opportunities for highly qualified applicants.

Professional and Executive Employment Offices register the following categories of applicants

- (1) persons holding bachelor's or higher degree or equivalent diploma in a professional or specialised course such as engineering, medicine, agriculture, veterinary science, technology and law,
- (2) persons holding post-graduate degree in education or an equivalent diploma,
- (3) persons holding master's degree in first or second division or higher degree or post-graduate diploma or equivalent in other subjects.

REFERRAL WORK

Referral of applicants to employers for consideration against vacancies is one of the primary functions of the employment service. While the total number of employment seekers on the registers of the employment exchanges on 31 December 1980 was 162 lakhs, the

average number of job opportunities notified each month to the employment exchanges was about 70,000 during the period January-December 1980. On an average, about 4.46 lakh submissions were made each month during January and December 1980. This, however, covers only a small percentage of the registrants. The large number of applicants whose particulars are not submitted are, therefore, dissatisfied and feel that they are not being given a fair deal. It is often not appreciated that the long period of waiting is due to several factors such as lack of adequate employment opportunities, considerable overcrowding of jobseekers in white collared and unskilled groups of occupations, lack of marketable skills, etc.

With a view to making available to employers qualified workers, particularly in categories in short supply, and having on the live registers of employment exchanges persons with critical skills, a scheme to advertise Central Government vacancies which are hard to fill was introduced in September 1968. During 1980, 70 advertisements for 4,439 vacancies were issued. Of the vacancies advertised, 996 were for scheduled tribes and 113 for ex-servicemen.

The central employment exchange maintains records of candidates of certain selected categories like engineering graduates, medical graduates, engineering diploma holders with experience, scheduled caste post-graduates and scheduled tribes graduates. This facilitates quick submission of highly qualified candidates against emergent demands placed upon the central employment exchange.

All vacancies arising in Central Government offices/establishments (except those filled through Union Public Service Commission or other similar recruiting agencies), irrespective of their nature and duration, are not only to be notified but are also to be filled through the employment service alone. Other sources of recruitment could be tapped only if the employment exchange issues a non-availability certificate.

For recruitment in quasi-government institutions, statutory bodies, etc., it has been laid down that vacancies occurring in them should invariably be notified to the appropriate employment exchange, and the recruitment should be made only through the employment service. The need for issuing advertisement for inviting applications or tapping other sources of recruitment should be considered only if the employment exchanges issues a non-availability certificate.

According to instructions, public sector undertakings are required to notify all vacancies arising under them (other than those to be filled through the UPSC) to the employment exchange/central employment exchange and to recruit staff against posts carrying the pay scale, the maximum of which does not exceed Rs 800, through the national employment service. Other sources of recruitment can be tapped only if the employment exchanges issues a non-availability certificate. Other senior posts have to be filled on an all-India basis, through the medium of press advertisement. Copies of advertisements are to be endorsed to the employment exchanges to enable them to sponsor candidates. While advertising such vacancies, it has to be stipulated in the advertisements that other things being equal preference will be given to candidates registered with employment exchanges.

During the period January-December 1980, 8.4 lakh vacancies were notified to the employment exchanges. In all, 4.78 lakh persons were placed in gainful employment. Figures of placements achieved in respect of different categories of persons on 30 June 1980 were as follows (in the next column)

Despite the enactment of the Employment Exchanges (CNV) Act, 1959, the degree of cooperation extended by employers in the private sector to the employment service has been very limited and many of them fill their vacancies without considering applicants sponsored by the exchanges

Category	placement (number in thousands)	Percent of placement against re- registrations
Educated (Matric and above)	100.00	7.9
Scheduled Castes	32.80	9.8
Scheduled Tribes	9.60	9.2
Ex-Servicemen	5.90	14.32
Women	65.90	7.0

EMPLOYMENT MARKET INFORMATION

The employment market information programme, which was initiated about two decades ago, covered, in the initial stages, all public sector establishments and non-agricultural establishments in the private sector employing 25 or more persons working for remuneration, falling under the purview of the EE (CNV) Act, 1959. Since March 1966, establishments in the private sector employing 10 to 24 workers are also being covered on a voluntary basis. The total number of establishments covered by the employment market information programme (excluding those employing 5 to 9 workers) was 1.95 lakh at the end of March 1980. Of these, 1.03 lakh establishments were in the public sector.

Information collected from establishments on a quarterly basis relates *inter alia* to the demand trends for personnel and vacancies remaining unfilled, etc. In addition, data regarding occupational and industrial distribution of employees in all establishments covered under the programme are also being collected on a biennial basis (alternatively in the public and private sectors at the end of September each year).

The only data regarding employment trends collected on a regular and continuing basis are under the employment market information programme. Data collected under this programme reveal that:

- (i) Employment in the organised sector increased on the whole by 3.0 per cent

(provisional) in 1979-80 as against 3.6 per cent in 1978-79 and 3.5 per cent in 1977-78

- (ii) Employment continued to grow in the public sector, the rate of growth being 4.3 per cent (provisional) over the previous year
- (iii) Employment in the private sector increased nominally by 0.3 per cent (provisional) as against 2.3 per cent in 1978-79

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND CAREER COUNSELLING

The national employment service renders vocational guidance and career advice through the University Employment Information and Guidance Bureaux and the vocational guidance units set up at the employment exchanges. Employment seekers are guided in the choice of careers, or vocations suited to their educational qualifications, interests and aptitudes in the light of prospective manpower demand and supply. At the end of December 1980, vocational guidance units were functioning in 263 employment exchanges in the country in addition to 71 University Employment Information and Guidance Bureaux. At the State headquarters, there are state vocational guidance units to coordinate and supervise the activities of vocational guidance sections at the employment exchanges. Collaboration with guidance services of the education authorities is achieved through coordination committees at Central, State and district levels.

Coaching-cum-guidance centres have been set up to render guidance to scheduled caste/scheduled tribe applicants. The applicants are equipped with information about job requirements and the types of tests/interviews they are likely to undergo when called by the employers. The centres also undertake follow-up with employers about placements against vacancies reserved for scheduled caste/scheduled tribe applicants. Ten such centres were functioning in 1980-81.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Directorate General of Employment and Training has been conducting classes in stenography for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe candidates, with a view to preparing them for various competitive examinations for filling up posts of clerks and stenographers.

The programme of vocational guidance and employment counselling is jointly operated by the Directorate General of Employment and Training and the State Directorates of Employment. The Directorate General of Employment and Training is responsible for the general policies and procedures, training of staff, preparation of tools and materials for the service, and effective coordination with guidance services under the educational authorities. The State Directorates of Employment administer the service through the employment exchanges and ensure effective liaison with the guidance service of the State Education Departments.

Vocational guidance is a continuous process of assisting the individual, starting from the school stage and, therefore, forms part of guidance services of educational institutions. For rendering this service to schools, specially trained Counsellors and Career Masters are provided by the educational authorities.

At the national level, a Central Coordination Committee on Vocational Guidance and Employment Counselling has been set up. Coordination at the State level is achieved through State Coordination Committees for Vocational Guidance. At the district level, there are District Coordination Committees for vocational guidance and employment counselling.

APTITUDE TESTING PROGRAMME

The objectives of the aptitude testing programme of the Directorate General of Employment and Training include application of tests for selection of suitable candidates for admission to industrial training institutes and

use of tests for assisting applicants in the choice of careers most suited to their aptitudes

The programme for selection of trainees in engineering trades at the industrial training institutes under the craftsmen training scheme has been in progress since July 1963.

The Directorate General of Employment and Training is responsible for the development of suitable aptitude tests, for conducting research to enhance the efficiency of the tests and for making overall improvement in the organisation of the programme. State Governments are responsible for conducting the tests at the industrial training institutes before final selection.

Some follow-up studies on tested selected and non-selected candidates have been conducted in order to judge the effectiveness of aptitude tests for selection. Correlation studies between aptitude test results and training performance of trainees have been conducted which show that aptitude tests can be profitably used for the selection of candidates in industrial training institutes.

A check list for gauging the interest areas of candidates seeking individual guidance at employment exchanges has been in use since 1962. This has now been revised incorporating new items and covering 11 interest areas in place of ten in the earlier check list. A battery of clerical aptitude tests for rendering guidance to applicants registered with employment exchanges is under preparation.

OCCUPATIONAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

In order to facilitate placement activities of the national employment service a need was felt for the classification of occupations. In 1945, the first endeavour was made to bring into use a 'Guide to Occupational Classifications'. This publication contained approximately a thousand briefly defined occupations. It was subsequently revised in 1948 and remained in use until 1958. During the post-independence period the tempo of developmental activities and of

industrialisation called for a more comprehensive occupational dictionary aimed at standardisation of the nomenclature and the occupational definitions. A national classification of occupations was prepared in 1958. This publication contained brief definitions of about 1,990 occupations. A revised edition of the national classification of occupations (1968) defines and classifies 2,484 occupations.

In addition, equation of trades in the Armed Forces to civilian occupations was undertaken to aid in the assessment of servicemen's suitability and to match their skills with civilian job-opportunities. Similarly, a survey to identify occupations suitable for the physically handicapped was done in 1973-74 to serve as a tool in the placement of handicapped persons.

An occupational information unit was set up at the Directorate General of Employment and Training in 1955 with supporting units in 13 States. Currently, the vocational guidance unit in the DGE&T looks after work relating to the national classification of occupations.

CAREER LITERATURE

The development of career information in the employment service dates back to 1955 when in pursuance of the Shiva Rao Committee's recommendation, a Career Pamphlets Unit was set up in the DGE&T. This unit initially produced occupational monographs and occupational field reviews. The Career Pamphlets Units also compiled and published Handbooks on Training Facilities (States-wise) both in respect of implant and institutional training.

The Career Information Programme received impetus in 1971 when a Career Study Centre was set up at the Central Institute for Research and Training in Employment Service (CIRTES) for the strengthening and intensification of vocational guidance and the career counselling programme. As a result, activities carried out by the Career Pamphlet Unit in the DGE&T have been transferred to the Career Study Centre. The activities of the

Career Study Centre currently include (i) compilation and publication of various types of career literature, (ii) training of key personnel in the field of guidance, and (iii) distribution of career literature to various users

The following types of creer literature have been produced since the inception of the Career Study Centre (i) Career information series, ii) Guide to careers, (iii) Bulletin on job opportunities in India, (iv) Handbook on training facilities (State-wise), and (v) Career posters/charts

SERVICES FOR THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

The National Advisory Council for the education of the handicapped suggested in July 1957 that special employment offices for the handicapped should be opened in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (now Ministry of Social Welfare) as a part of the national employment service. At present there are 18 Special Employment Exchanges for the Physically Handicapped

The Special Employment Exchanges follow the selective placement principles in referring and placing physically handicapped persons in various jobs, namely (i) job referral only on the basis of ability, (ii) individualised approach, (iii) positive attitude towards disabled persons, (iv) correction of disability prior to placement, and (v) placement at highest level of his skill

Employment assistance through Special Employment Exchanges is at present restricted to the blind, deaf and dumb, and the orthopaedically handicapped. As an experimental measure, the scope of Special Exchanges at Bombay and Delhi has been extended so as to enable them to render employment assistance also to the following categories of the physically handicapped (i) mild neurological cases, (ii) respiratory cases (non-infectious), and (iii) cases of paraparesis and hemiparesis

During the period January to December 1980, 7, 937 physically handicapped persons

(775 blind, 377 deaf and dumb, and 6,785 orthopaedically handicapped) had registered their names with the special employment exchanges for employment assistance. Placement was secured for 1,836 persons including 58 blind, 97 deaf and dumb and 1,681 orthopaedically handicapped persons. The total number of disabled persons on the live register on 31 December 1980 was 27,108, which included 2,757 blind, 1,855 deaf and dumb, and 22,496 orthopaedically handicapped

In order to assess the vocational and psychological needs of physically handicapped persons and also to render assistance in the rehabilitation of such persons, two Vocational Rehabilitation Centres were set up by the Directorate General of Employment and Training in June 1968. Nine more centres were added by 1980-81 out of Government of India funds

OTHER SPECIALIZED SERVICES

Special cell for ex-servicemen For the speedy rehabilitation of disabled servicemen and dependents of those killed/severely disabled in action, the Directorate General of Employment and Training have set up a cell for ex-servicemen at the headquarters

Deployment of surplus personnel The Directorate General of Employment and Training has been responsible for the deployment of workers rendered surplus in river valley and other projects since May 1965. A central coordination committee composed of representatives of the employing Ministries is attached to the DGE&T for coordinating the work of finding avenues for reabsorption of surplus workers. In addition, State Coordination Committees have been set up to deal with the deployment of surplus workers both in the public and private sectors at the State level. A Special Cell has been set up in the DGE&T by the Ministry of Home Affairs for placement of Class IV central government employees declared surplus

Central Employment Exchange (Labour)

Gorakhpur: The Gorakhpur Labour Organisation was established during the War in 1942 to meet the urgent demand for labour for defence projects. After the cessation of hostilities, at the request of the coal mining industry, the Government of India agreed to supply Gorakhpuri workers for collieries subject to the condition that the industry would bear the entire cost of recruitment. Since then the Labour Department, Gorakhpur, has been supplying labour to collieries in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, etc. against indentations placed on it through the Coalmines Recruiting Organisation (CRO). The Depot had been supplying labour to other indenters also. The Labour Department, Gorakhpur, was converted into a Central Employment Exchange on 1 April 1976.

Employment Assistance to Migrants from Erstwhile East Pakistan, Repatriates from Burma and Sri Lanka: The DGE&T has set up a special cell at its headquarters to render special employment assistance to migrants from erstwhile East Pakistan and repatriates from Burma and Sri Lanka. From January 1964 to October 1980, 79,776 East Pakistan migrants were registered at employment exchanges, of whom 8,354 have been placed. Similarly during the period June 1966 to October 1980, 32,337 repatriates from Burma and 41,501 repatriates from Sri Lanka were registered with the employment exchanges, of whom 6,924 from Burma and 3,481 from Sri Lanka were placed in jobs through the employment exchanges.

TRAINING AND RESEARCH

The Central Institute for Research and Training in Employment Service was set up at New Delhi under the DGE&T in October 1964. The functions of the Institute cover training of employment service personnel and research into problems relating to various activities of the employment service.

The Directorate General of Employment and Training has been conducting special *ad*

hoc studies and surveys in the field of employment and manpower. Industry surveys are being conducted since 1972 in a phased manner. The principal objectives are: (i) to study the manpower situation in specific industries which are vital from the point of view of development and employment creation; and (ii) to anticipate the manpower requirements of these industries well in advance so as to guide the youth into productive channels of employment. The important industries covered so far in the series are (a) radio and television, (b) cement, (c) paper and paper products, (d) fertilisers, (e) drugs and pharmaceuticals, and (f) soda and soda ash. During 1980-81, reports of surveys on (i) hotels and restaurants and (ii) plastics industries were published. New surveys were launched during 1980-81 on (i) machine tools industry; (ii) power industry, (iii) computer industry.

WORKING OF EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES

A committee under the chairmanship of Shri P.C. Mathew was set up to look into various aspects of the employment service to make it more responsive to changing circumstances and needs, and also to examine and recommend special steps in the matter of placement of the disadvantaged and handicapped sections, such as the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes, the minorities, the physically handicapped, etc. The main recommendations of the Committee which submitted its report in November 1978 are as follows.

- (i) For improving the effectiveness of Central direction, the employment service should be made a national service and there should be a separate Ministry of Manpower Planning and Employment at the Centre and corresponding departments in the States together with the normal executive field staff of a Directorate General (or a statutory National Manpower Commission as in the United Kingdom) which combines both

executive and secretariat functions at government level, in respect of the subjects concerned

- (ii) It should be made obligatory for public and private sector employers to compulsorily utilise the employment exchanges for filling up all Class III and IV posts. They should approach the employment exchanges first where they will have all the facilities of self-service, i.e. inspect the registration cards in the required category and make their own panel (not necessarily based on the date of registration) containing candidates whom they would like to call for interview provided they notify in advance the general scheme of selection, namely, the criteria on the basis of which the selection is to be made.
- (iii) Where it is considered necessary to set up a Special Recruitment Board or Staff Selection Commission or Subordinate Services Commission, the employment exchange organisation should be closely associated with it as its secretariat and entrusted with the task of preparing lists of candidates from the employment exchange registers arranged in order of merit on such criteria as the Recruitment Board, etc., may prescribe.
- (iv) Government should examine whether, in view of the undertaking to maintain a free public employment service implied in India's ratification of ILO Convention No. 88, it is legal or proper for Service Commissions and Recruiting Boards, who select candidates to fill jobs in the public sector, to charge fees from the large number of people who apply for every job that is advertised.
- (v) The legality and propriety of existing restrictions imposed by State Governments on registration at employment exchanges in each State should be reviewed and residential restrictions, if any are needed, should be imposed by Central enactment in accordance with constitutional provisions.
- (vi) Employment exchange organisation should do everything possible to change its public image as a bureaucratic organisation bound by procedural redtape. It should develop the image of an agency which studies the requirements of its employer-clients, the form of assistance to recruit employees satisfying certain requirements, and try to provide quality service efficiently and promptly.
- (vii) The facilities and amenities available at employment exchanges should be improved and augmented, if the exchanges are to function efficiently and smoothly and prove more popular with employers and workers.
- (viii) The work of the employment exchanges should be extended to rural areas and skeleton staff provided for this work at the Block level.
- (ix) The National Employment Service should be accepted as a Central Plan Scheme during the Sixth Plan and necessary tied funds allocated to it on 100 per cent basis. After the expansion programme ceases to be a plan scheme, the recurring cost which will be a part of non-plan expenditure will be shared by Central and State Governments on a ratio of 60:40, so that the recommendations could be implemented.

The recommendations of the Report are under the consideration of the Government

B N LELE

ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Among social welfare services to the community, environmental sanitation and personal and community hygiene play a significant role in promoting and preserving the physical, mental and social well-being of the people which is the main aim of community health care. The Health Survey and Development Committee (1946) was the first to focus attention on the role of environmental sanitation services in promoting better health, and observed that "Environmental Sanitation was at a low level in most parts of the country and lack of Education and Health Education added materially to the difficulty of overcoming the indifference with which people tolerated the insanitary conditions around them and became apathetic to suffering from illness".¹ Lack of sense of responsibility of the average person in regard to community hygiene also seems to be a contributory factor for the low level of sanitation prevalent in the country. The Committee drew up a broad outline for planning national health services, including plans for improvement of environmental health services in the country.

The Environmental Health Committee (E H C), constituted by the Government of India in 1948, made a study of the problem in depth and formulated specific plans and recommendations in their report submitted in 1949.² The Committee identified the existing problems of sanitation with respect to housing, town and village planning, water supply (urban and rural), community waste collection and disposal, rural sanitation, food sanitation, water pollution, etc.

HISTORICAL REVIEW

Before independence, health was primarily a provincial subject. The provinces, in turn, passed on this responsibility to local bodies and Panchayats. The local bodies, with their meagre resources, paid very little attention to measures designed to protect the health of the

people. Among aspects related to health, environmental health received the least attention because of heavy capital expenditure and maintenance costs involved in providing these facilities. Consequently, at the time of the Environmental Health Committee report, only 16 per cent of the towns in India had some sort of protected water supply which served 6.15 per cent of the total population or 48.5 per cent of the urban population. Rural water supply was mostly from wells, tanks, rivers and streams, which were largely unprotected. As regards community waste collection and disposal, hardly 3 per cent of the population in urban areas was provided with complete or partial sewerage systems. Over one-third of the households used unsatisfactory service latrines, one-third had no latrine and used open spaces, drains, etc. for defecation.

Shortage of housing resulting in overcrowded conditions of living in urban areas existed even before independence. The shortage of housing in 1948 was roughly estimated to be of the order of 18 lakhs. Besides, an additional requirement of 10 lakh houses arose for rehabilitation of refugees after the partition of the country. Rural sanitation was unknown and villagers would defecate indiscriminately in open fields, leading to soil and water pollution and consequent spread of water-borne and helminthic diseases, which situation has not changed even to-day. Indiscriminate disposal of cattle wastes and lack of drainage further aggravated the insanitary conditions in the surroundings leading to fly and mosquito breeding. Although industrial labour housing received some attention even before independence, various labour housing policies and schemes that were adopted since the Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in 1930, were not successful and made no tangible progress in solving the labour housing problem. Consequently, the growth of slums in urban centres went on unabated. Nearly a third of the population in big cities like Calcutta live even today in squalor. The situation further worsened due to the influx of refugees. The

main problem of rural housing was not of overcrowding but defective and substandard construction with inadequate lighting, ventilation, improper flooring, lack of water supply and of safe excreta disposal facilities, etc

In the pre-independence era, although the pace of industrial development was not rapid, growth of towns went on haphazardly and hence the stage was already set for migration of the rural population to towns and cities in search of employment. Some provinces had enacted Town Planning Acts and set up town planning organisations. But, the majority of provinces had no planning bodies to regulate and promote housing activity. Municipal Acts of towns and cities provided some, even though inadequate, measures for protection of food and food articles against contamination. But even there, bye-laws and regulations were not strictly enforced. There was no licensing and certification of slaughter houses, and no control over milk or food adulteration, and there were no hygienic dairies. *Khatahs* were spreading all over the towns and cities, creating insanitary conditions allround. Restaurants, canteens and other catering establishments were inadequately checked for sanitary provisions and personal hygiene of the staff. As a result, spread of gastro-intestinal diseases through food contamination and outbreak of epidemics like cholera, food-poisoning, etc, were a common feature in most of the cities and towns. The situation has hardly improved even now, although some local bodies and State Governments are better aware of the problem than before.

Due to urbanization and industrialisation, domestic and industrial waste waters are being discharged untreated into nearby water courses leading to pollution of water courses, big and small. The problem of water pollution resulting in damage to aquatic life, human life and property became more and more perceptible by the mid-fifties. The infrastructural facilities to improve environmental conditions were totally inadequate. Most of the States did not have separate public health engineering

organisations. There was an acute shortage of trained manpower in various categories to implement programmes and maintain the facilities provided in a satisfactory manner. Material resources were also limited. Indigenous production of water supply and sewerage materials and of machinery and other equipment was limited and these were being largely imported.

AFTER INDEPENDENCE

As a part of the post-war reconstruction activities, some States initiated their own five-year plans in which provisions were included for implementation of urban and rural water supply and sanitation schemes. Most of the States, however, came up against formidable obstacles in the way of raising finances for such schemes, building up organisations, and procuring materials.

In the initial stages of the First Five Year Plan (1951-56), provision for water supply and sanitation schemes in the States was made from allocations under community development and local development works. At this stage, however, there was hardly any Central direction or planning in the matter. In 1953, information obtained from State Governments showed that they were unable to make any headway in regard to their water supply and sanitation schemes due to lack of finance, trained personnel and shortage of materials. The States desired that the Centre should formulate a programme of assistance to them to proceed with such schemes. As a result, the Union Ministry of Health announced the National Water Supply and Sanitation (NWSS) programme as a part of health schemes under the plan in August 1954. A central organisation, namely, the Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation (CPHEEO) was established to formulate and implement the policies and schemes. Besides coordinating and assisting State Governments in augmenting water supply and sanitation facilities, CPHEEO also took upon itself the responsibility of training

technical manpower, procuring equipment, supplies and materials from within and outside the country, and providing technical guidance and expertise to the State public health engineering organisations. Under the NWSS Programme, the States would receive long term interest bearing loans returnable in 30 years for undertaking urban schemes. For rural projects, the States would receive 50 per cent grant-in-aid and 50 per cent as loan from Central funds. The pattern of loan and subsidy has, however, been modified from plan to plan to meet the changing needs. Initially, the scope of the rural scheme was restricted to the financing of the more difficult schemes involving piped water supply to an individual or a group of villages. Only villages with less than 5,000 population were covered by the grant. The scheme was in operation for only 18 months during the First Five Year Plan.

The Second Five Year Plan witnessed the emergence of the public health engineering profession as the most important factor in the success of the programme. Many States which did not have separate public health engineering organisations, started setting up a separate Departments of Public Health Engineering. Training and research programmes were initiated. Although better progress could have been achieved during the Second Plan, many constraints in speedy implementation of the schemes were noticed. Absence of a separate organisation, lack of standardisation in design, delays in the processing of schemes, and shortage in supply of materials were some of the main bottlenecks that were faced during this period. Provisions for water supply and sanitation was given a low priority in national planning even towards the end of the Second Five Year Plan. A comprehensive concept of the overall magnitude of the problem was lacking both in urban and rural sectors even at the end of the Second Plan. At this stage, the Government of India set up a number of committees and organised meetings and seminars to provide a forum for experts to meet and evaluate programmes, identify the constraints and suggest measures to overcome

them for achieving better progress in the subsequent plan periods. Notable among these are the recommendations of the Technical Cooperation Mission³ (TCM), Simon Committee,⁴ WHO sponsored seminar on financing and management,⁵ etc. These expert groups pointed out the need for according high priority to water supply and sanitation in the nation-building programme and emphasised perspective planning, setting up of water and sewage boards in each State as a combined utility concern which could function independently and work out schemes on a self-financing basis, and tapping of various sources of finance, including bonds, debentures, loans from public financing institutions and setting up of municipal financing corporations, etc. They also stressed the need for building up training facilities for all categories of personnel required for manning the programme and for augmenting production capacities for proprietary materials and equipment to meet increased demand and to save foreign exchange. The need for an accurate assessment of existing conditions both in urban and rural areas on which future planning and implementation could be based was repeatedly emphasised by these expert bodies. A target to provide minimum drinking water facilities to all villages in the country by the end of the Third Five Year Plan was also envisaged as an important and essential step in the nation building programme. Many recommendations of the expert groups remain unfulfilled even after several Five Year Plan periods. However, progress during the three succeeding plan periods was much better than in the preceding period. A brief resume of progress is presented in the following paragraphs.

COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLY URBAN

By the end of Fifth Plan period (March 1978), 85 per cent of the urban population (10.9 crores at the 1971 census) was covered by water supplies. Table 'A' below depicts the coverage.

TABLE—A
Coverage of Water Supply in Urban Towns by September 1980

Class of town	Population range (1971 census)	Coverage by water supply	
		By number of towns (percentage)	By population (percentage)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
I	1,00,000 and above	99.3	95.2
II	50,000 – 1,00,000	93	84.4
III	20,000 – 50,000	83	75.6
IV	10,000 – 20,000	66	60.8
V	5,000 – 10,000	76	51.2
VI*	5,000 and below	57	40.1
		Average	82.9

*Urban villages

Although the above Table tends to convey a picture of significant progress, yet one could come across common incidents in major cities and towns such as long queues at the public stand posts, frequent occurrence of outbreak of cholera and other water-borne diseases, uncertain and intermittent nature of supply forcing people to use unsafe water sources, etc. There are many inadequacies in these supplies, such as partial coverage (both in population and area), low per capita supply, inefficient and ill-maintained distribution systems, intermittent nature of supply leading to wastage and contamination, and unsatisfactory operation of treatment plants leading to frequent breakdowns and substandard quality of supply. However, there are also some bright spots in the progress on urban water supply. The age-old concept that water is a free commodity and that it is the responsibility of the exchequer to provide this commodity free of cost is gradually changing with the setting up of water supply and drainage boards in some major cities and towns. People are now willing to pay for the water that is supplied to them. Metropolitan cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Delhi, have now set up Development Authorities which are concentrating on augmenting water supplies. Urban water supply and drainage boards have been set up by many States with an autonomous status to enable these boards to undertake comprehensive planning and find

resources for augmenting of schemes for water supply and sewerage in municipal towns.

COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLY RURAL

Although rural water supply received attention since the launching of the five year plans, it was given adequate emphasis only during the Fourth Plan when the accelerated rural water supply scheme was launched in 1972. During the Fifth Plan, rural water supply formed an integral part of the minimum needs programme. It is estimated that upto the end of March 1980 about 96,500 villages have been provided with drinking water facilities covering approximately 10 per cent of the rural population. Table below gives the status of water sources in villages in India as on 31 March 1980.

	Nature of water source	Number of villages
1	Problem villages*	1,53,000
2	Inadequate, unprotected	1,78,000
3	Adequate but unprotected	2,07,000
4	Adequate, protected	38,000

*Problem villages are those where there is water scarcity, cholera endemicity, guinea worm infestation, and hill and saline tracts. The list of problem villages is being revised and about 96,500 of these villages have been provided with water supply upto 31 March 1980.

The reasons for poor coverage of rural water supply are manifold. Firstly, water supply and environmental sanitation did not receive due

priority in national planning. There is no unified agency even now to provide these vital services in the rural areas. Rural water supply schemes are carried out at least under four different programmes, namely, national water supply and sanitation programme, community development programme, local development works, and programmes for the welfare of backward classes, without proper coordination with the result that the efforts to improve the situation get diffused over a wide range. There was no long range planning due to the lack of accurate assessment of the magnitude of the problem. Only by the end of the Fifth Plan was fair knowledge available of the extent of the problem and categories of villages exposed to high risk and low risk. Though allocations increased from plan to plan, the funds available were too meagre to solve the gigantic problem. Even if moneys were available, it would not have been possible to accelerate progress significantly due to lack of suitable infrastructure, material resources and appropriate technologies to meet the challenging situation.

Realising the importance of protected water supply to the rural population, the Government of India allocated high priority in the plan for the development of rural areas and

decided in 1978 to give 100 per cent financial assistance to the States to cover as many villages as possible. The plan allocations were more than doubled during the financial years 1978-79 and 1979-80. Meanwhile, the United Nations declared the decade 1981-1990 as the 'international drinking water supply and sanitation decade' and stressed the need to provide drinking water to all by the end of the decade. India being one of the signatories to the declaration is committed to achieve the target of providing drinking water to all people in the country by 1990. The Centre as well as the States are at present working out strategies to meet the requirement of the international water supply and sanitation decade. It is hoped that even if the set goals are not fully reached due to various constraints, there will be an accelerated programme and a large proportion of the population will be provided with safe drinking water by the end of the decade.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE TREATMENT

Progress on urban sewerage and sewage treatment is rather discouraging. The existing sewage treatment plants are very few. Table 'B' below shows the coverage by the end of March 1978.

TABLE B
Coverage by Sewerage

Class of towns	Population range (1971 census)	Number	Number of towns served	Percentage of towns served	Total population of towns (1971 census)	Population served (lakhs)	Percentage of population served
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
I	1,00,000 and above	150	69	46.0	532.0	274.0	51.50
II	50,000 – 1,00,000	221	35	15.8	148.0	14.0	9.40
III	20,000 – 50,000	652	50	7.7	200.0	7.6	3.80
IV	10,000 – 20,000	988	25	2.5	139.0	2.0	1.43
V	5,000 – 10,000	821	14	1.7	62.0	0.7	1.12
VI	5,000 and below	289	5	1.7	9.0	0.09	1.00
		3,121	198	63.4	1090.0	296.39	27.34

Source: Personal communication from CPHEEO

The reason for slow progress in the past are absence of an integrated approach towards water and sewerage services, delays in setting up of water and sewage boards to provide these two services on a self-supporting basis and in locating new avenues of financing and maintaining the projects, and, above all, insufficient emphasis at different levels that development of sewerage systems should proceed hand in hand with water supply systems if the preventive health care of the people is to be ensured

CONSERVANCY SYSTEMS

Even among the towns that have a sewerage system, many are partially covered. A parallel conservancy system has to serve the 'bucket' privies in the unsewered pockets of such sewerage systems. The bucket system is both inhuman and unsatisfactory as groups of downtrodden human beings make a house to house collection of human excreta in baskets/buckets and carry them on head or on the shoulders, deposit the nightsoil on roadside or release them in night-soil containers or carts for final disposal by trenching or composting.

A survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation in 1973-74 showed that one-third of the urban households had no latrine whatsoever while one-third had bucket latrines⁶. In effect, out of 4 crore urban households 1.3 crore have service latrines. There are nearly 2.5 crores of bucket latrines in India, of which Gujarat has the highest number of 1,86,000 bucket latrines^{7,8}.

The existence of such a large number of bucket latrines, the inhuman and unhygienic manner in which nightsoil is collected and carried, and the uncontrolled methods used for disposal are the root cause of the high prevalence of gastro-intestinal, diarrhoeal and parasitic infections in the cities and towns in the country. The most satisfactory system to deal with this situation is provision of flush latrines, extension or provision of underground sewerage systems and disposal of

effluents after treatment. This is hard to achieve in all towns and cities within the foreseeable future because of the large financial outlays required. A modest estimate even to cover towns with over a lakh population puts the figure at Rs 1,200 crores. Obviously, it will be difficult to reach the goal of sewerage system for all towns even by the turn of the century. In order to find an interim solution and to emancipate the class of *Bhangis* (sweepers), the Government of India formulated in 1967 a scheme for conversion of service latrines to water seal flush latrines connected to public sewers or septic tanks. The problem received greater attention in 1975 under a Centrally sponsored scheme with 100 per cent assistance to States which envisaged the setting up of pilot projects in 30 selected towns with a population range of 20,000 to 50,000. Work which is both significant and pioneering is being carried out by social organisations in some States. Prominent among them are Safai Vidyalaya (school for cleanliness) in Gujarat and Sulab Souchalaya Sansthan (cheap cleaning organisation) in Bihar. Safai Vidyalaya has played a key role in converting 70 per cent of the 1.32 lakh service latrines into non-service type in Gujarat by promoting, guiding, monitoring and working as a liaison with local bodies. Sulab Souchalaya Sansthan carries out the entire programme right from house to house survey to the completion of the conversion work and even maintains and follows up the programme. The success of these two organisations attracted the attention of international bodies like WHO, UNICEF and the World Bank and a global pilot project programme has been launched by the World Bank.

RURAL SANITATION

A large percentage of the rural population is economically poor, educationally backward and socially not well organised. There are, besides, wide variations of soil, climate, physiography, culture, attitudes and customs of the people which make the problem of rural sanitation in general and human excreta

disposal in particular complicated and different from region to region. During the post-independent era, many of the expert committees which have reviewed the progress on water supply and sanitation have stressed the need for an integrated approach to water supply and sanitation in rural areas. Yet, very little or no progress has been made in rural sanitation. It is perhaps the most neglected programme, even though much has been said about community health care through primary health centres in the community development programmes. The contribution made by the peripheral health workers towards this end is negligible with the result that even today hardly about 2 per cent of the rural population is provided with sanitary latrines. There is no concerted effort made either by the States or the Centre to improve the condition with the result that even today the rural people suffer from a high incidence of gastro-intestinal diseases and helminthic infection due to soil and water pollution by indiscriminate defecation in open fields. On the other hand, many social organisations, philanthropic institutions and recently some international voluntary organisations are attempting to improve rural sanitation in localised areas. A scheme for utilising waste to produce energy to meet the energy requirements in villages was first initiated by Khadi Gramodyog by installing biogas plants in rural areas. Cattle dung and in some places both *Gobar* and human excreta is fed into household or community biogas plants as a step forward in solving rural sanitation problems. The schemes have been very popular and already several thousands of biogas plants have been built in many States, particularly in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Gujarat. The scheme is, however, too costly to reach the poorest of the poor in rural areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

With the rapid growth of towns and industries, the problem of environmental pollution is assuming alarming proportions due to land, water and air pollution. Indiscriminate

exploitation of natural resources is also leading to ecological imbalances threatening the existence of different species of living beings. Deforestation, without simultaneous afforestation, is posing problems of soil erosion, change of micro-climate and extinction of rare birds and wild life. Realising the importance of control of environmental pollution, the Government of India has enacted, as a first step, the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act which was passed by the Parliament in March 1974.⁹ A similar Act for Control of air pollution is under the active consideration of Parliament. A Central Board and State Boards are functioning and some progress has been achieved in controlling and abating water pollution although much more needs to be done. A national committee for environmental planning and coordination has been set up to define policies and draw up programmes for environmental control. The Department of Science and Technology has set up a wing on environmental planning, to coordinate activities initiated by both national and international agencies, such as UNDP, UNEP and WHO. A separate Department of Environment has now been set up.

The major polluters of water resources are industries and local bodies which discharge industrial effluents and domestic sewage without any treatment or with inadequate treatment. The major polluters of air are the industries which do not scrub their gaseous effluents to remove dangerous pollutants, such as oxides of nitrogen, sulphur dioxide, etc. Hardly 5 per cent of the industries have set up treatment plants to treat liquid wastes discharged into the environment. Only some industries have installed equipment to remove pollutants from the gaseous emissions from their chimney stacks, with the result that the degree of air pollution in major cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Ahmedabad is comparable to cities abroad like New York and London. It is too early to assess the achievements in the control of environmental pollution as it is only recently since the law has

been in existence and many of the boards are yet to be provided with necessary infrastructural facilities to administer the law

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

The public health importance of proper collection and disposal of domestic refuse and other solid wastes is yet to be recognised by urban dwellers as well as civic administrators in the country. The poor and improper collection of refuse, inadequate and unsatisfactory transportation systems in vogue, and improper disposal lead to insanitary conditions. Realising the potential of wealth from waste, the Union Ministry of Agriculture launched a scheme for producing compost manure as long back as 1945. By 1974, 3,200 towns were covered by the scheme. Yet the compost produced is about 48 lakh tonnes as against a potential of 108 lakh tonnes¹⁰. To bridge the gap between the present level of compost production and potential, a scheme to set up mechanical compost plants in 35 municipal towns and cities has been launched as a joint effort of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Works and Housing of the Government of India. Mechanical compost plants of 150 to 200 tonnes capacity have been set up in major cities like Calcutta, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Baroda, Madras, Lucknow and Kanpur. The main constraint is the high cost of production which is less attractive to farmers and the difficulty of transportation from the city to rural areas where they are needed.

MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH

Prior to independence, there was no training facility in India in the field of environmental health¹¹. Soon after independence, a post-graduate degree course in public health engineering was started at the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Calcutta, in 1948 to develop manpower required for implementing water supply and sanitation schemes under the five-year plans. Today there are well over a dozen institutions training environmental engineers at post-

graduate level. In addition, the Union Ministry of Works and Housing organises a number of refresher and orientation courses for training different categories of personnel such as plant operators, drillers, plant analysts, etc., at various institutions. A National Environmental Engineering Research Institute has been established by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research at Nagpur to undertake research in the field of environmental engineering to solve many of the problems faced in the execution of environmental engineering projects. Several institutions and universities are now actively engaged in research activity. Financial support for research is now available from organisations such as the Indian Council of Medical Research, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Department of Science and Technology, University Grants Commission and U.N. agencies. The training facilities are, however, not adequate to meet the increased demand for training personnel. Moreover, the percentage of expenditure on research in terms of national income has remained more or less static.

HOUSING AND SLUM IMPROVEMENT

With the urban population increasing at a faster rate than the addition to the stock of housing, the housing shortage is increasing year after year. The estimated rate of houses constructed in India is about two dwellings per 1,000 persons as against a requirement of 10 per 1,000 persons. The Ministry of Works and Housing have formulated several schemes both for urban and rural housing. The National Building Organisation coordinates the housing activity in the country. A Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) is also functioning to implement housing schemes. State housing boards, apex housing corporations, and housing cooperatives are also functioning to implement and accelerate housing projects. There is, however, an acute shortage of housing throughout the country and according to the 1971 census, there was a

shortfall of 1.56 crore houses in the country. Slum clearance being costly and not practicable in many situations, slum improvement is accepted as an interim policy. Slum improvement schemes are being executed in major cities and towns. Since over 30 per cent of the urban population live in slums or on pavements mere improvement of some physical environmental conditions has not made an impact on slum dwellers. The problem is not merely physical but also of socio-economic nature and requires an integrated programme to uplift slum dwellers.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

Demographers have estimated that, on one set of assumptions, India's population will reach a figure of roughly 94.1 crores by 2000 A.D. of which 20.5 crores will be urban and 73.6 crores will be rural. By the middle of 1980 the coverage of urban water supply (vide Table A) is about 83 per cent, based on 1971 census figures.¹² The balance of the urban population yet to be covered by the turn of the century will be about 11.4 crores. Urban sewerage coverage by March 1978 was about 2.9 crores (vide Table B) and the balance of the population projected for 2000 A.D. is about 17.5 crores. The number of households with service latrines will increase about 1.8 crores by 2000 A.D. Problem villages needing priority for water supply will increase to 2,60,000 covering a population of about 22 crores. By and large, rural sanitation will have to cover the entire prospective population of about 73.6 crores. Measures to control environmental pollution have to be stepped up to keep the environment within a reasonable level of purity. All these measures require large investments on solid and liquid waste treatment and proper disposal. As water supply is introduced in rural areas, waste water disposal measures become essential to prevent vector borne diseases like malaria, filaria, etc. Integrated systems for water supply and waste disposal both in rural and urban areas to maintain an ecological balance and to recover energy and nutrients from wastes are the most desirable approaches

needed in the future.¹³ In addition, water conservation and water quality management are absolutely essential to make the best use of the limited water resources in the country. An expanded training programme to make available different categories of personnel required to deal with the expanded and varied activities in environmental control will be needed. Steps have already been initiated in this direction. Many new training programmes, both of short term and long term duration, are being organised at different institutions.

All these measures to improve sanitation and community hygiene should be undertaken with a clear vision and perspective planning with time bound targets to attain the desired objective of preservation and promotion of community health and hygiene. Even a modest estimate of expenditure involved to provide these services within the next two decades will be of the order of Rs. 30,000 crores. This will not only imply problems of funding but also problems related to manpower and material resources. The commitment made for the international decade for water supply and sanitation should also be given due consideration. Both the Centre and the States are already in the process of working out strategies to meet this obligation to provide 'Water and Sanitation for All' by the end of this decade.¹⁴ To raise financial resources, besides internal mobilisation, bilateral assistance and aid from international bodies and financial institutions, such as World Bank, UNEP and others, have to be sought. Installed capacities for production of materials have to be fully utilised and further augmented to bridge the gap between production and demand. It will be necessary to promote research and develop appropriate technologies to reduce costs and speed up progress. The policies and programmes should take into account the aspirations and felt needs of the people for whom the services are meant. Community participation in all the programmes right from conception to the stage of maintenance should be an essential component in accelerating progress and

achieving the objectives. This aspect did not hitherto receive due attention and should be given more emphasis. Social scientists and social organisations have a big role to play in the future, particularly in rural water supply and sanitation programmes. Information on various aspects of environmental health and sanitation should be disseminated through various media, both formal and non-formal, to elicit the fullest cooperation in utilising and maintaining the services provided. Comprehensive planning covering all aspects should be worked out before undertaking a programme of phased development.

S SUBBA RAO

NOTES

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EVALUATION OF SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES

The role of evaluation in planning, programming and implementation can hardly be over-emphasised. As early as the Second Five Year Plan, the need for evaluation and its scope were outlined as follows. "The need for evaluation exists in all fields of development and more especially in those in which new or expanded activities are being undertaken. In all planned development many unknown factors have to be reckoned with. Understanding of the interaction of different elements that enter into programmes which bear closely on the life of the people can be of material help in, enhancing their contribution to the welfare of the community. Evaluation has, therefore, to

be increasingly oriented towards studies of a selective and intensive type, motivated by and leading to purposive action".¹

The Third Five Year Plan makes particular reference to the need for evaluation of welfare services: "Inevitably, extension in a field of activity as varied and dispersed as social welfare brings its own problems and these call for systematic review from time to time of what has been achieved and of the measures needed to improve the quality of welfare services".²

Generally, there is a tendency to stick to traditional types of welfare programmes with little innovation in organisation and in the method of delivery of services. Programme models developed in other countries may not be suitable for us. They need to be adapted to our context and their relevance tested. This calls for launching of pilot projects with suitable modifications. There has been pressure from bodies such as the Estimates Committee, planning agencies, the press and legislators for evaluating social programmes before making firm commitments for their expansion.

While reiterating the need for concurrent monitoring and *ex post facto* evaluation of selected programmes, the draft plan for the period 1978-83 pointed to certain weaknesses which need to be identified and remedied, namely, "benefits not going to the target groups, operating costs being much higher than anticipated, interest in the schemes beginning to decrease, unexpected sociological consequences, and so on".³

There is general agreement on the objectives of evaluation (i) Evaluation should be based on an objective approach to the study of problems; subjective or impressionistic elements should not be allowed to enter in the findings (ii) Evaluation should be in the nature of a positive service designed not only to find out shortcomings, failures and weaknesses but also to suggest methods of improvement and corrective and remedial measures. (iii) Evaluation has also an educative function, as its findings can create a better and more

enlightened understanding of the implementation and achievement of different programmes and schemes, and in general, of progress towards goals underlying the plan. (iv) Evaluation should be forward-looking, not merely a post-mortem of the past. Such an orientation would help the government in using evaluation findings for understanding the future course and prospect of achievement.⁴

THE CONCEPT

Every programme has some objectives or goals to achieve. Evaluation helps to determine the growth of a programme as it relates the performance to the goals in view. In this process, evaluation covers aspects relating to the accessibility, availability and quality of the services, their utilisation, their relevance or appropriateness to local needs and expectations, viability of the programme, efficiency of the personnel, and the consequences or impact of the programme.

It would be relevant at this point to examine the various uses of the term 'evaluation'. The American Public Health Association defines evaluation as "the process of determining the value or amount of success in achieving a predetermined objective. It includes at least the following steps: formulation of the objective, identification of the proper criteria to be used in measuring success, determination and explanation of the degree of success, recommendations for further program activity".⁵

The above definition is comprehensive and includes both 'conceptual' and 'operational' elements. Several social scientists use the term 'effectiveness' while defining the term 'evaluation'. The indicator for effectiveness is the extent of fulfilment of the programme objectives.

In order that an evaluation study may have the required focus and validity, there is need to develop various criteria of success or failure of any programme under study. Paul Benjamin has listed three major sets of criteria in the evaluation of public health programmes (i)

assessment of effort, by which is meant the energy and action of the service team, that is, the talks given, visits made, meetings attended, patients seen, (ii) assessment of effect, which refers to the results of the effort rather than the effort itself, that is, changes in health information, attitudes, or behaviour, reduction in the incidence of disease, and (iii) assessment of process, which deals with an analysis of 'why' and 'how' an effect was achieved, that is, resistance of community leaders, lack of motivation among potential clients, cultural superstition, and fear⁶ The above will hold true for social welfare as well

One often comes across terms such as 'evaluation', 'programme evaluation', and 'evaluative research'. These have different connotations. The term 'evaluation' is used in a general way to denote the process of assessment or judgement. It may not satisfy the rigours of social science research. Reports of *ad hoc* study teams or review committees belong to this category. Programme evaluation stands between evaluation and evaluative research. It meets to a varying extent the three criteria of objectivity, adoption of scientific methods for collection of data and purposeful analysis of results, which may have programme implications. Evaluative research is a kind of programme evaluation and implies the use of scientific designs with a view to isolating the distinctive contribution of the programme towards changes noticed in relation to the target population. This calls for collection of relevant data from the experimental and control groups at different points of time 'before', 'during' and 'after'. Besides operational difficulties that may be encountered, this type of study is expensive and time consuming.

Terms such as 'formative' and 'summative' evaluation are currently used. They differ in respect of the type of information collected and the nature of their use. In the case of the former, the information is fed in at the developmental stage of the programme whereas in the case of the latter, the purpose is to judge the worth of the developed

programme. This distinction may not be possible in respect of all the on-going social programmes.

The scope, content and nature of evaluation would depend on the purposes of evaluation or the terms of evaluation set forth by programme administrators or policy makers and the intended uses of the result. Accordingly, the design and techniques used would differ from programme to programme (case study, *ex-post facto* survey and quasi-experimental).

Further, evaluation is to be distinguished from progress reporting or monitoring. They serve different purposes but are complementary. The distinction between the two has been expressed thus by Raj Krishna: "Monitoring and evaluation are different but indispensable processes which must move simultaneously. Monitoring must deliver a limited amount of information about every scheme at very short intervals. Evaluation, on the other hand, must go in for more thorough and detailed assessments of a limited number of schemes over longer stretches of time and is expected to test basic hypothesis, bringing up material which does not lead only to immediate remedial measures but leads to basic restructuring. Monitoring is designed to facilitate immediate corrective action by administrators. Evaluation is meant to improve basic policy, project formulation and the structural aspects of project administration"⁷

TYPES OF EVALUATION

Broadly speaking, two types of evaluation, internal and external, can be thought of according to the agency entrusted with the task. The former forms part of the 'system' and is subject to the control of the chief of the organisation. It may have the advantage of easy access to all records and reports. It will be primarily concerned with data of a quantitative nature relating to progress in implementation. Internal evaluation, even if efficient, cannot be a substitute for external evaluation by an independent agency which alone can ensure objectivity together with appropriate resources.

and knowledge. Also, it would find greater acceptance among the public, the press and the legislators. In the case of external evaluation, the scope will not only be broader but also deeper.

A periodic review of programmes is carried out by Administrative Intelligence Units or by Planning and Evaluation Cells situated in Ministries concerned at the Centre and in the States. The review is based on progress reports received from the field and other agencies often on prescribed proformae. They generally furnish information relating to physical achievements and expenditure. There is no proper arrangement at present for verification of the accomplishments reported even on a sample basis. The reporting system, however, has improved over the years.

PROBLEMS

Considerable difficulty is faced while evaluating social programmes for reasons such as lack of clear definition of goals, unrealistic claims in terms of benefits and inadequate inputs. These factors are referred to as 'vague goals', 'strong promises' and 'weak treatment'.

One of the problems encountered in studying the impact of social programmes is in respect of scientific control, as it is difficult to control the variables. Therefore, the evaluation has to be pragmatic and to accept compromises, wherever necessary, by adopting research techniques and methods suited to field conditions.

As funds are scarce, there is a need to judge the 'worthwhileness' of a programme in terms of 'cost'. Increasingly, attempts are being made in developed countries to undertake cost benefit analysis, cost effectiveness studies and cost analysis. These are found to be difficult to apply in social welfare programmes because of problems encountered in relation to assumptions and estimation and measurement.

Insufficiency of funds for evaluative studies and demand for 'quick' reports sometimes lead to compromises in evaluation designs and in

the nature and quality of data collected. This affects the quality of the reports and in the long run turns out to be counter productive. At the same time, considerable delay in presenting the findings due to poor designing of the study and its implementation is likely to affect the utility of the evaluation.

EVALUATION SYSTEM

The Programme Evaluation Organisation (P.E.O.), set up in 1952 under the auspices of the Planning Commission, is the principal national organisation charged with the responsibility of evaluating development programmes in rural areas. Over the years, its structure and scope of work have undergone changes. As present, it has a total staff strength of over 700 (including technical and administrative staff) functioning at the central, regional (seven) and field units levels (27). The Planning Commission has been urging upon Ministries at the Centre as well as in the States to set up their own evaluation cells or monitoring units for review of progress.

Over a period of 27 years (up to 1980), the P.E.O. has brought out as many as 112 evaluation reports. These relate to areas such as rural development, agriculture, labour and employment, rural institutions, health and nutrition, social welfare, etc. Social welfare accounts for only 8 per cent of the total reports. Similarly, only about 10 per cent of the reports brought out by State evaluation organisations relate to social welfare. There is need for the evaluation system as a whole to accord higher priority to the evaluation of social welfare programmes.

It is in this context that one may view the efforts of the Ministry of Social Welfare of the Government of India over the years in promoting research and evaluation studies.

For the purpose of formulating realistic policies and appropriate welfare programmes, the importance of the study of social problems and objective assessment of on-going welfare programmes received recognition by the Department of Social Welfare of the

Government of India as early as 1973. This led to a scheme of grants to encourage universities and research institutes for undertaking research and investigation into significant social welfare problems and experiences.

The scheme was initiated in a small way in 1973 and gathered momentum over the years. During the period 1973-74 to 1981-82, 184 projects were sanctioned; a number of these were the evaluation of welfare programmes.

In the light of the experiences gained, the Ministry of Social Welfare has found it advantageous and useful to sponsor evaluation studies of specific programmes simultaneously in a number of States identifying a suitable agency in each State. Suitable illustrations are: Study of the Level of Development of Social Welfare Services, Evaluation of the Working of the Scheme of Welfare of Children in Need of Care and Protection, Study of Old Age Pension Scheme, Evaluation of the Scheme of Functional Literacy, and Evaluation of Special Employment Exchange for the Physically Handicapped. This approach necessitated a common research design, instruments of observation, tabulation and analysis of data. It also facilitated comparison of evaluation findings of studies from different regions and an overview of the functioning of the programme in different contexts. This kind of exercise could be still more rewarding if it were conducted first on a pilot basis in one State and the experience critically reviewed before replication in other States.

Evaluation studies are also sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, University Grants Commission and some other bodies, though their role in the field of social welfare has been rather limited. Doctoral candidates sometimes choose subjects for study which are of the nature of evaluation. In a number of schools of social work, the students are required to undertake a research project for their Master's degree. This is intended to inculcate in them the ability to study systematically any social problem or on-going welfare programme. The scope of

such studies tends to be limited and is exploratory in nature. Therefore, the study design and the instruments used may not be sophisticated. The conclusions drawn may have limitations. Therefore, there is need to provide for advanced courses in research and statistics beyond the Master's level and for awarding research fellowships for this purpose so that after equipping themselves with the necessary research skills, they may participate actively in research and evaluation studies.

It would be helpful if the Central Government and specially the Ministry of Social Welfare and the University Grants Commission could encourage establishment of research and evaluation units in selected schools of social work so as to enable them to contribute in a larger measure and more systematically to research and evaluation in fields which otherwise remain neglected. This would also enrich the quality of teaching in these institutions.

FOLLOW-UP

The existing arrangements for follow-up of evaluation reports need to be strengthened. This aspect was considered in detail at the Conference of the Heads of State Evaluation Organisations held in November 1977, when the following proposals were made:

"As regards follow-up, two measures are clearly essential. First, after an evaluation report is released, a series of seminars must be held, with all concerned officers participating along with selected academics and non-officials to review the findings. Second, the seminars should be requested to formulate a set of concrete recommendations for the needed changes in policy and/or administration. These should be formally sent by the planning authorities to the administering agencies. The administering agencies should be requested to report to the planners regularly on the action taken to make the recommended changes. The evaluation organisations will have to have cells to keep track of the follow-up action and to go on pressing for it. In the case of continuing

default in taking corrective action, the issue must be discussed at the time of Annual Plan discussions of the schemes in question”⁸

The Conference also stressed the urgent need to improve the ‘quantitative and qualitative’ capabilities of the Central and State evaluation organisations. For this purpose, two Review Committees were set up, one to review the organisational structures in the States and to suggest improvements in them in order to cope up with the increasing demands being made on them and the second to consider programmes for training evaluation staffs with a view to improve their technical capability. The Conference also emphasized that, in view of the complexity of social programmes, evaluation teams have to be multi-disciplinary, evaluation staffs should be competent and have the necessary knowledge and skills, and the results of evaluation studies should be made available without undue delay.

CONCLUSION

Though it has developed and expanded specially during the last decade, the existing evaluation system is still inadequate to meet the expanding programme needs. There are many gaps in our knowledge about the progress of programmes, nature of beneficiaries, quality of the services and the overall impact. Weakness in the evaluation system arises as much from the nature of the tasks involved as from possible inadequacies in research and analytical capability. Evaluation staffs frequently come from the discipline of economics and do not have the theoretical orientation needed for evaluating social programmes. Considering the large volume of work and expanding functions, as already suggested, there is need to strengthen research and analytical capabilities in selected schools of social work and to interest a wider range of institutions in the scientific and systematic study of social welfare and social development problems.

V GOPALAN

NOTES

- 1 Planning Commission, Government of India, *Second Five Year Plan*, 1956, p 251
- 2 Planning Commission, Government of India, *Third Five Year Plan*, 1961, p 716
- 3 Planning Commission, Government of India, *Draft Five Year Plan (1978-83)*, 1978, p 124
- 4 Planning Commission Government of India, *Report of the Working Group on Evaluation*, 1973, p 14
- 5 “Glossary of Administration Terms in Public Health”, *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol 5 C, February 1960, pp 225-226
- 6 Paul Benjamin, D, “Social Science in Public Health”, *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol 46, November 1956, pp 1390-1398
- 7 Programme Evaluation Organisation, Planning Commission, Government of India, *Proceedings and papers of the first conference of the Heads of State Evaluation Organisations*, May 1978
- 8 *Proceedings of the First Conference of the Heads of State Evaluation Organisations*, op cit p 8

FAMILY AND CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMME

The scheme of family and child welfare projects was initiated by the Central Social Welfare Board in the Fourth Five Year Plan. It was implemented from November 1967 in phases by the conversion of the erstwhile welfare extension projects started by the Board for the welfare of women and children in rural areas. These projects represented in themselves a nation-wide effort, however small in their coverage, to provide through a network of welfare centres a package of services in the related fields of improved health care, immunisation, and education and training for rural women in home craft, mother craft, personal hygiene and environmental sanitation. The projects were designed on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee on Child Care (1961)¹ and the

Evaluation Committee on Welfare Extension Projects (1964)²**ORGANISATION**

A typical family and child welfare project consisted of one main centre at the block headquarters, five sub-centres in five key villages, and two extension centres. The main centre was equipped to function as (i) a Balvikas Kendra (child development centre) providing services like pre-school education, health care and immunisation for children, and (ii) Griha Kalyan Kendra which functioned as a demonstration centre for the training of rural women in home management, child care, nutrition, mother craft and family welfare in an effort to improve their quality of life. The same pattern was adopted, though on a modest scale, at the sub-centre.

The training of women at Griha Kalyan Kendra had two main objectives. In the first place, it provided an opportunity to village women, most of whom were illiterate or semi-literate, to get knowledge on subjects with which they are intimately concerned. The women were associated with cooking food for themselves and getting information about the relevance of protein rich foods in maintaining positive health specially for young children, and the management of a home. Wherever possible, the Griha Kalyan Kendra was converted into a mobile unit with the Griha Sevika assuming a leadership role in selecting and motivating young mothers to join the camp at the sub-centres. Secondly, the camp became a nodal point where other block level agencies providing services in family planning, health, applied nutrition, cottage industry and other development activities could give talks on these subjects to widen the horizon of the knowledge of the women participants. The work at the sub-centre was basically an extension of work planned and implemented at the main centre. Inevitably, the impact of the programme depended on certain variables, not the least important of which was the spirit of dynamism imparted to the programme by the chairman and members of the Functional

Committee of the project and the cooperation extended to it by the development agencies at the block and village levels.

The attendance at the Balvikas Kendra at the main centre varied from 40 to 50 per day and about 30 to 40 at each of the five sub-centres. The Mukhya Sevika assisted by six Bal Sevikas and one Griha Sevika and an equal number of helpers, constituted the personnel for the delivery of a package of services for pre-school children and women in a project. If the programme did not achieve great heights or was not replicated on an extensive scale, it was largely due to organisational weaknesses and the absence of a sense of involvement on the part of official and non-official organisations operating at the block level.

At the project level, the responsibility for implementation of the programme was vested in a Functional Committee consisting of the representatives of the block Panchayat Samiti and local voluntary social workers nominated by the State Social Welfare Advisory Board. The Committee was headed by a Vice-Chairman nominated by the State Board who would, in actual practice, function as the Executive Vice-Chairman of the Committee, exercising control over the day-to-day affairs of the project. There were four other nominees each of the State Government (through the Panchayat Samiti) and the State Board, besides the Block Development Officer as the treasurer, and other local officials as members.

In its original formulation, the scheme was based on the understanding that the Panchayat Samiti would assume responsibility for organising the family and child welfare projects as the Panchayat Samiti would be the body to promote family and child welfare programmes as an integral part of the plan for rural development and rural welfare. It was suggested that the Panchayat Samiti, and not the State Board, should appoint the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Functional Committee in consultation with the State Board. The Evaluation Committee, however, recommended that the chairmanship should be entrusted to such a member either of the

Panchayat Samiti or the voluntary organisation who holds respect in the block.³ The Central Social Welfare Board issued similar instructions to the State Boards in October 1972.⁴ At the central level the Board assumed under the Government's direction over-all responsibility for the execution of the programme on a national scale and for laying down guidelines for its implementation in a phased manner. The Chairman of the State Social Welfare Advisory Board was the Chairman of the State level Coordination Committee, with the State Government officials concerned with social welfare, health, education and rural development departments as its ex-officio members.

At the block level, except for the fact that the Block Development Officer was the ex-officio treasurer in almost all cases, the pattern varied with regard to the representation of other departments on the Functional Committee of the project. The composition of the Functional Committee and the level of its performing ability in the actual delivery of services was influenced, to some extent, by the fact of its constitution by the State Government or by the State Board. In either case, the programme suffered because of the absence of a spirit of teamwork between official and non-official members of the Committee.

While, at least in theory, the family and child welfare projects were, like the welfare extension projects (community development) before them, coterminous with the community development block, their actual coverage was largely confined to the eight or ten centres serving a group of peripheral villages in their vicinity. They did not generate a multiplier effect because they were all along conceived as pilot projects. Essentially, the aim was not only to bring about a significant development by way of an integrated package of services for children and women but, through them, to create a new awareness among the rural population. The Griha Kalyan Kendra, for example, provided exposure to community health and sanitation, personal hygiene, home

craft, home management, mother craft, nutrition and family planning. It also served as a focal point for organising social welfare activities in an integrated manner for the rural community as a whole. This was possible in cases where the projects were able to establish coordination with block authorities, primary health centres, schools, the applied nutrition programme, small and cottage industries, etc., to widen the base and enrich the programme at the operational level.

The programme of family and child welfare was sponsored with an initial outlay of Rs. 13 crores for the Fourth Five Year Plan; this was subsequently reduced to Rs. 7.50 crores. Initially, the pattern of sharing of expenditure between the Central Social Welfare Board and the State Government was in the ratio of 3:1; this was later changed and the entire expenditure was met by the CSWB till each project completed five years. However, since some State Governments were unable to provide the required funds after the initial five years, the Government of India agreed to bear the entire expenditure of the projects upto the end of the Fourth Plan (March 1974).

Each family and child welfare project was estimated to cost about Rs. 60,000 per year on recurring items; a sum of Rs. 55,500 was provided as non-recurring grant which included Rs. 35,000 for buildings (out of which Rs. 20,000 was earmarked for the main centre and the balance for the five sub-centres in equal proportion), and Rs. 20,000 for equipment for the office of the Functional Committee. The schematic budget also provided a grant of Rs. 1,000 each to the two aided centres run by voluntary organisations as extension centres under the scheme. In actual practice, however, expenditure on such recurring items as salaries rose sharply due to increase in the pay and allowance of the staff and, by the end of the Fourth Plan, each project cost about Rs. 98,000 on recurring items alone. These inputs, although adequate in themselves, were not matched by any assistance given by State Governments, although there were cases where the local

community raised contributions in cash and kind to augment the resources of the project

PROGRESS OF THE SCHEME

The scheme of family and child welfare projects did not acquire the dimensions of a movement embracing all sections of rural society. By and large, it did not obtain the active support of the States. The implementation of the scheme was initially confined to the conversion of the then existing 264 Welfare Extension Projects (Community Development pattern) and 17 Demonstration Projects and some new projects in rural and tribal areas as recommended by the first Evaluation Committee (1970).⁵ The Evaluation Committee suggested that the programme of family and child welfare projects should be utilised to remove the prevalent imbalance of social services in backward areas. However, between 1967-68 and 1972-73 (when the number of projects was frozen at that level), the Board had started 281 projects in different States and Union Territories. While this was an advantage in that some extension work had already gone into the building of these projects in the earlier phase, the decision to convert them to the family and child welfare projects was not in all cases made after a careful survey of the area specially in terms of the involvement of the local official agencies and the support of the people in general.

In pursuance of the government's decision to transfer the projects to the States after five years, all the 281 projects were transferred to the States. 167 in 1974-75, 55 in 1975-76, 21 in 1976-77, 30 in 1977-78 and 4 in 1978-79, excluding 4 projects in Jammu and Kashmir which were closed under the instructions of the State Government. The projects are in most cases being continued by the State Boards as before with the financial support of the State Government except in the case of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Punjab, Delhi and Goa where the government have taken over the projects.

A training programme for workers was

launched in 1967, keeping in view the phased expansion of the programme. To begin with, senior officers of the Central Social Welfare Board at the headquarters and welfare officers attached to the State Boards, were deputed for an orientation training course for three months at different schools of social work. For field level workers, a three month orientation course, followed by a full job course of ten months' duration, was organised for all categories of staff at the six Family and Child Welfare Training Centres.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND FAILURES

The scheme was based on the assumption that with respect to services such as primary health care and immunisation of children, the project staff would get necessary help from the Primary Health Centre doctors and their staff posted at the main Primary Health Centre and its sub-centres, likewise, with regard to nutrition education, the services available under the applied nutrition programme were to be used in order to optimise the utilisation of developmental activities in progress in the project or at the village level. In actual practice, however, it was not possible to establish, in most cases, a high level of coordination and support from different agencies connected in one way or the other with the project.

At the national level, coordination was sought to be achieved by the Central Standing Coordinating Committee, and it was possible to bring about some degree of coordination in the planning of maternal and child welfare and other aspects of the programme at the Central level. The administration of the programme by the Central and State Boards, however, continued in the same fashion and at the same level as for Welfare Extension Projects, and the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee on Family and Child Welfare Projects (1970) for the establishment of a supervisory machinery for family and child welfare projects at the Central and State levels were not implemented. The actual

implementation of the programme suffered due to the absence of a regular flow of information and feedback to identify the main weaknesses of the programme and to take suitable action at various levels

In a study of 23 family and child welfare projects conducted by the Delhi School of Social Work,⁶ it was observed that "Coordination Committees at the Central and State levels, except for the purpose of reviewing the programme, are casual and cursory".⁷ The study found that the "Panchayat Samitis are not found to be actively participating in the programme as expected and the utilisation of various services through the Panchayat Samiti has been found to be very minimal".⁸ On the other hand, the Panchayat Samitis had extended their cooperation to the Functional Committee in providing or getting rent-free accommodation for a majority of the projects "It was encouraging to find", the report adds, "that 85 sub-centres from 23 projects were conducting their programmes in rent-free accommodation provided by the Panchayat Samiti".⁹

With regard to primary health care, especially medical check-up and immunisation of children for which detailed instructions and suggestions for action were issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to the States and followed up by the Central Social Welfare Board with the State Boards, the report found that "though the programme content is well planned, the services rendered are far from satisfactory".¹⁰ There were only 16 projects out of 23 which received cooperation in one form or the other, while three received no help, and information was not available for the remaining four projects

One of the major problems faced in the implementation of the scheme, at least in its initial stages, was that the Board had to make a start with the training of personnel as well as the implementation of the scheme almost simultaneously. The Review Committees on Family and Child Welfare Training Centres

(1974)¹¹ expressed the view that this was not a healthy practice as it led to a yawning gap between the completion of the training of personnel and the implementation of the programme. The more serious problem faced by the State Boards concerned with the implementation of the scheme at the grassroots level was a lack, if not the absence, of full-scale involvement of other government departments operating at the block level, at any rate in such crucial areas as health, sanitation and promotional activities for women

By the end of March 1971, of the 226 of FCW projects in operation, 184 were covered by the primary health centres and 114 were covered by the applied nutrition programme. The type of assistance received from these agencies and the extent of cooperation in real terms have not been computed. The Board did not get a regular feedback from all the projects to be able to quantify assistance received by the projects from other governmental and non-governmental organisations at the block level over a period of time. Moreover, built in machinery in the scheme for the compilation of information, monitoring and evaluation was lacking with the result that no systematic efforts could be made at any time to take any remedial action to correct any structural deficiencies, introduce innovative changes in the programme, or strengthen it by way of cooperation with other agencies in order to ensure that the projects were able to achieve a substantial degree of success in the objectives that were set before them.

With an ever increasing number of grants to voluntary institutions under different programmes, and the number of welfare officers remaining constant around fifty during the period 1967 to 1974, the need of a separate machinery for supervision of this programme, as recommended by the Evaluation Committee on Family and Child Welfare Projects (1970), was sorely felt

Despite these structural and organisational difficulties or weaknesses, the projects succeeded in creating a new awareness among

rural women and provided a degree of care to the Balwadi children. In the process, an effort was made to develop a network of closely linked services in which welfare activities for pre-school children and training of girls and young mothers were given a pride of place. Since the State Governments, by and large, did not incorporate them as a part of their strategy for rural development or even of social welfare planning at the State and block levels, the projects became in due course isolated endeavours for reaching welfare services to women and children in deprived areas.

The evaluation report of the Delhi School of Social Work on the Family and Child Welfare Projects noted that the Balwadi programme alone was implemented in all the projects.¹² With regard to the number of women's training camps organised in the projects, the position varied considerably depending on the availability of staff, suitable accommodation, mobility of staff (this was often impaired due to the non-availability of project jeep), perception by the workers of their role, and their ability to motivate women to attend these camps. Not surprisingly, the study found that very few of the projects surveyed were able to reach the target of 10 camps for a year.¹³

The logistics of the delivery of services in an integrated manner are somewhat less complex now than they were when the scheme was taken up for implementation in 1967. With improvement in rural communications, the process of social change could be hastened not only for the five lakh rural women who participated in the training camps during this period but, through them, other rural women could also be involved in the process of social change which was sought to be achieved through the mechanism of these projects. Likewise, while the number of rural children covered was around six lakhs, their long-range impact could have been far greater if the number of projects had been increased and necessary changes incorporated and with greater stress on relatively neglected areas.

The coverage achieved by the 281 FCW Projects was rather small, they suffered from

organisational weaknesses and their efforts to provide services especially in areas as health care, nutrition, and immunisation of children did not succeed to the desired extent. In exceptional cases, they received some assistance from the PHCs. If the FCW projects failed to achieve a durable impact, it was largely because, as had so often happened in the past, they could not be integrated into the developmental planning process at the State, much less, at the block level. Wherever the block administration, the PHC staff, and the Panchayati Raj institutions lent their full support to the projects, they achieved impressive gains in mobilising the rural community in the achievement of the programme objectives. Despite their shortcomings and chequered progress, family and child welfare projects did provide a landmark in the development of a national strategy for organising an integrated package of welfare services for rural women and children.

B N DHAR

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- 1 *Report of the Committee on Child Care (1961)*, Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi, 1965
- 2 *Report of the Evaluation Committee on Welfare Extension Projects*, Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi, 1964
- 3 *Report of the Evaluation Committee on Family and Child Welfare Projects*, Department of Social Welfare, Government of India, 1970, p. 19
- 4 *Guidebook on Family and Child Welfare Projects*, Central Social Welfare Board, 1974, p. 18
- 5 *Report of the Evaluation Committee on Family and Child Welfare Projects*, *op cit*, p. 54
- 6 Delhi School of Social Work, University of Delhi, *Study of the Family and Child Welfare Projects*, Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi, 1976
- 7 *Ibid*, p. 148
- 8 *Ibid*, p. 150
- 9 *Ibid*, p. 151
- 10 *Ibid*, p. 154

- 11 *Report of the Review Committee on the Family and Child Welfare Training Centres (1974)*, Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi
- 12 Delhi School of Social Work, *op cit*, p 31
- 13 *Ibid*, p 51

FAMILY PLANNING

The concept of 'family welfare planning' substituting the earlier use of the term 'family planning' is quite nebulous. It seeks to convey much more than family planning and much less than family welfare. It places emphasis on planning as a means to the obvious end of welfare. The implication is that a rational approach to family formation is essential for improvement in the welfare of family. In India, the concept has gained currency in the course of the post-independence development effort. It has been widely canvassed with a view to facilitating the acceptance, in their own interests, by couples in the reproductive span of life, of the need to limit family size. It has indeed been held that such acceptance of limitation of families on a large scale would substantially contribute to the success of the national policy of population control. The policy was initiated early in the First Five Year Plan period in the light of the evolving demographic situation that was seen to constitute a major parameter conditioning economic development.

In the light of this fact we will consider in turn (i) the nature, dimensions and implications of population problem impinging on development, (ii) the policy adopted at the national level for its resolution, (iii) the strategy and content of the programme undertaken in pursuance of that policy, (iv) the performance of that programme, and (v) the prospects of resolving the still persisting problem of population.

THE POPULATION PROBLEM

India feels the predicament of population growth much more acutely than almost any other developing country not because its pace is comparatively faster, which certainly it is not, but because its large population base makes the annual additions to it appear quite so imposing in absolute terms. According to the census figures, India's population continually increased from 1921 onwards from a level of 25.1 crores to that of 36.1 crores in 1951 of 54.8 crores in 1971 and 68.4 crores (provisional) in 1981. The average annual addition to population was a little less than 37 lakhs for the first 30 years but as much as 93 lakh in the next 20 and over 1.3 crores in the last decade. There has hardly been any deceleration in the rate of increase since 1971.

What is even more disconcerting is the great potential that has already been built up for further growth of population; the process will continue for a long time to come. The official population projections, resting on the assumption of reasonable success in lowering birth rates, suggest that India's population will reach in 2001 a figure just about 5 crores below the 100 crore mark. Accordingly, the average annual addition to population in the next 20 years is likely to be around 1.45 crores.

The incidence of net immigration being entirely negligible, the increase in population results from the difference between birth and death rates. Over a long historical past prior to 1921, India's population had grown at a very low pace, due to the recurring famines and epidemics and the ever present endemic diseases, which had kept mortality at high levels. Since 1921 the situation has improved rather slowly upto 1951 and rapidly thereafter. In 1911-20, the death rate was as high as 47 per thousand and expectation of life at birth only 20 years. The death rate decreased to 31 in 1931-40, 22 in 1951-60 and 19 in 1961-70. The expectation of life at birth was estimated to be 46 years in 1961-70. The birth rate did not show a corresponding trend. It decreased from an abnormally high level of 48 per thousand in

1911-20 to 45 in 1931-40 and to 41 in both 1951-60 and 1961-70. It is this relative stability of the birth rate in the face of a substantial decrease in the death rate that has resulted in the rapid growth of population since 1921, especially since 1951.

The above rates are based on the census age returns. They are more credible than those based on the registration system. Each set of the two rates, however, represent only the average position of the census decade in question. For short term variation in the rates, we have now an alternative source in the Sample Registration Scheme which was launched in the middle sixties to get more reliable estimates of vital rates by using the method of dual record. According to the data from this source, the death rate, which had decreased to a level of 15 per thousand in 1971, was 14.2 in 1978, suggesting that the improvement in mortality had ceased to be operative. The stabilised mortality situation exhibits several disquieting features, like high infant and childhood mortality as well as high maternal mortality. The birth rate, on the other hand, was 37 in 1971 marking a measure of decrease from the census estimate of 41 for 1961-71. This trend had brought the birth rate down to 33 in 1978. This has raised a hope that the cherished trend of fertility decline has set in, though it is still in an incipient stage. This hope has, however, been belied by the 1981 Census returns.

It would, on the whole, appear that the position of the country is one around the middle of the phase of rapid population growth, which may in due course conclude with a population nearly four times as large as in 1951. That rapid population growth does in fact make the task of economic development much more arduous is reflected in the unsatisfying performance of planned development which India had launched soon after independence in 1951. To begin with, planning had shown a great promise, even if we admit that the circumstances had then been very favourable for agricultural production. From the Second Plan onwards, difficulties

started accumulating leading to a virtual breakdown of planning after the 1966 Bihar drought. The position improved somewhat around the turn of the decade thanks to the selective success in generating the 'green revolution'. But the course of the seventies has remained quite uneasy. Varied reasons are advanced for the limited performance of planning. There have been some significant achievements in terms of basic development but they have not helped to relieve the situation of widespread want and misery. It is obvious that population growth has been one of the major constraints in bettering the performance of planning. In any case, this is the most generally shared feeling.

Population growth is indeed a process that is closely interlinked with the course of development, whether that course is autonomous or directed by planning. By enlarging the denominator in the calculation of per capita income it greatly reduces the macro gains when expressed in micro terms. It nullifies attempts to restrain consumption directed at raising the levels of savings to be invested in economic growth. It distorts the allocation of available investible resources in favour of the satisfaction of current needs as against the creation of potentialities for bettering the lot of the future generations. The fact that the economy is at a low subsistence level renders it difficult to develop human resources through education, health and other services. It compounds the problem of unemployment and accentuates social and economic disparities leading often to social tension and political unrest. Population is not neutral to any of the varied facets of national progress and when it grows in a situation already characterized by dire want and abject misery, it becomes a powerful contributing factor in the inhibition of economic growth, in the promotion of social disorganisation and in the generation of political instability.

POPULATION POLICY

As noted earlier, the policy directed towards restraining the growth of population was

initiated in the First Plan period. But the concern about population growth resulting from unrestricted fertility has been of much longer standing. It surfaced in fact in the last decade of the nineteenth century, when the 1891 Census report invoked Malthus to reflect on the prospect of population increase. That report contended that overpopulation was responsible for the poverty of the Indian masses. The subsequent series of census reports right upto 1951 invariably harped on the same theme and deplored the difficulties in the general adoption of birth control on account of the entrenched traditional social and economic structures. Apart from the Census Commissioners and the high officials of the British rule, there were several Indian scholars who admitted overpopulation as the cause of India's backwardness, particularly in the economic field. The most enthusiastic among them was P. K. Wattal who, as early as in 1916, viewed that the reduction of the birth rate was a precondition for a decrease in death rate in general and in infant mortality rate in particular as well as for rise in the standard of living of the people.

This overpopulation thesis was rejected by several of the more eminent Indian scholars, including Radha Kamal Mukerjee, Gyan Chand, D. G. Karve, B. N. Ganguli, and D. Ghosh, during the 1930's. They argued that overpopulation was but a symptom of the underlying malady of arrested economic progress during the British rule and blamed the callous indifference of the colonial rule toward the misery of the masses. They pleaded for a more positive role by the state in ameliorating the conditions of the masses and in promoting economic and industrial progress. Their denunciation of the overpopulation thesis did not, however, prevent them from recognizing the need for tempering the increase in population. They all pleaded for the creation of social and economic conditions conducive to the general adoption of methods for limiting the size of family. At the more popular level, the premier political party, the Indian National Congress,

too was quite aware of the need for population control as a part of comprehensive development. In 1938, the Congress had set up a National Planning Committee under the chairmanship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. One of its sub-committees was devoted to the question of population. This sub-committee had categorically held that the state should adopt a policy to encourage family planning and the limitation of children in the interests of social economy, family happiness and national development. The sub-committee's report was adopted and published by the Party in 1947.

Thus, when, after the Congress had assumed power in the new independent state and the Government of India had launched planning in 1951, it had the benefit of well considered views on the question of population, as propounded by the ruling party's own committee set up for the purpose. These views were followed up in the formulation of the First Plan. Adopting a rather cautious approach the plan had, however, pronounced that "in the short run, in the earlier crucial stage of development, in view of the shortage of capital rather than of labour force, a rapidly growing population was apt to become more a source of embarrassment than of help to a programme of raising standards of living." Looking at the demographic situation in the context of potentialities for development, the plan had assumed that the 1941-51 rate of population increase measuring only about 1.3 per cent per annum would remain unchanged over the next generation. It did, however, say that "this assumption might or might not be legitimate. The trends in population cannot be altered quickly and any reduction in birth rates may well be neutralized by a corresponding reduction in death rates."

In any case, the First Plan recognised that the pressure of population was already so high that a reduction in the rate of its growth was a major desideratum. It further suggested that this could be achieved only by a reduction in birth rate, which could be secured by the realisation of the need for family limitation by

the people on a wide scale. It, therefore, pleaded for adoption of positive measures for inculcating among the people the need and techniques of family planning, in addition to improvement in living standards and the spread of general education, especially among women. On considerations of the health and welfare of family, the plan pronounced that the measures relating to family planning should form a part of the public health programme. Thus was initiated a population policy, within the framework of planning, which amounted to an introduction of health and welfare oriented family planning programme within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health.

In the Second Plan period, it became abundantly clear that population increase was more rapid than was assumed by the First Plan. Then followed the 1961 Census to demonstrate a great acceleration of population growth which was likely to last for a long time. The succeeding plans, while continuing the thrust of the policy laid down by the First Plan, accordingly laid increasing emphasis on the urgency of arresting the trend of rapid increase in population. The Second Plan held it as inescapable that an effective curb on population growth formed an important criterion for rapid improvement in incomes and levels of living, while the Third placed the objective of stabilizing the growth of population over a reasonable period of time at the very centre of planned development.

Thereafter, the approach to population policy would appear to have reacquired its welfare orientation which was apparent in the First Plan without any dilution of urgency of effective control of population growth. The Draft Outline of the Fourth Plan had, for example, noted that "under Indian conditions, the quest for equality and dignity of man requires as its basis both a high rate of economic growth and a low rate of population increase. Even far-reaching changes in social and economic fields will not lead to a better life unless population growth is controlled. Limitation of family is an essential and inescapable ingredient of development."

With the passage of time, the initiative in formulating population policy passed on to the Ministry of Health, on whom the task of population control had rested all along. In an important pronouncement at an international conference at Bucharest in 1974, the Minister of Health and Family Planning had maintained that 'development was the best contraceptive', implying thereby that the development strategy may require reorientation in order to better serve the purposes of population policy. This was in line with the common viewpoint presented at that conference by most developing countries that population policy should form an integral part of developmental planning.

The position had, however, rapidly changed thereafter. This is clearly reflected in the statement of the National Population Policy adopted by the Parliament in the middle of 1976. This statement recognized that 'the real enemy was poverty' on which a frontal attack was mounted by the Fifth Plan's minimum needs programme. It proceeded, however, to assert that "simply to wait for education and economic development to bring about a drop in fertility is not a practical solution. The time factor is so pressing, and the population growth so formidable, that we have to get out of the vicious circle through a direct assault upon this problem as a national commitment." This direct action too envisaged several supportive welfare measures including the packaging of health and nutrition with family planning and special efforts to raise the levels of female education. But before these more wholesome measures could get off the ground, the population policy suffered from an excessive politicization of the more direct population control measures so much as to contribute to the change in the government at the Centre.

The new (Janata) government which came into power at the Centre in 1977 approached the population problem with a measure of prevarication. It substituted family welfare for family planning in the nomenclature of the dealing Ministry and issued a fresh statement

on the National Policy, which reiterated several of the clauses of the 1976 policy but contended that "family planning has to be lifted from its old and narrow concept and given its proper place in the overall philosophy of welfare. Under this policy, family planning was to be pursued as a wholly voluntary programme as a part of a comprehensive policy covering education, health, maternity and child care, family welfare, women's rights and nutrition". These elements were not in any sense new; what was new was the official commitment to eschew force and compulsion in applying measures of population control

The Janata Government did not last long. The Congress led by Mrs. Gandhi resumed power at the Centre in the beginning of 1980. So far, it has kept its options open on this crucial but sensitive issue of population control. Meanwhile, some spade work has been done by the Working Group on Population Policy that was set up by the Planning Commission during the Janata regime. Its report pleads for a more effective integration of population policy with the strategy of development. The group anticipated that the country's population will attain a net reproduction rate of unity at the end of the century, when the birth rate would be 20.5, death rate 8.7, infant mortality rate 49, and an expectation of life at birth 63.4 years. The basic idea underlying the considerations of the Group is that the promotion of motivation for the practice of family planning is contingent upon a host of social, political and economic factors beyond the control of any single ministry or agency. In recognition of this fact, the programme of generating demand for family planning should be broadened so as to involve both official and non-official agencies undertaking developmental work that impinges on the life of the people, and determined effort should be made to involve the people themselves not only in family planning but also in this developmental work at the grass roots level. There is obvious merit in this position but whether it would carry weight with policy planners of today and

tomorrow remains a matter of guess.

The Sixth Plan (1980-85) envisages "the long term goal of reducing the Net Reproduction Rate to unity by 1995 for the country as a whole. That is possible only by reducing the birth rate to 21 per thousand of population, death rate to 9 and increasing the proportion of couples protected by family planning to about 60 per cent"¹

THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMME

The propagation of family planning in India is much older than the population policy narrated above. Faint beginnings of a voluntary birth control movement can indeed be traced to the closing years of the last century. This related to the association of several prominent Indians with the work of the Neo-Malthusian League founded in England in 1877. Annie Besant, who figured prominently in the defence of contraception in U.K., had a long spell of active public life in India in the first quarter of the present century. N.N. Mukerjee in Calcutta and R.D. Karve were prominent among those who actively pursued the cause of birth control in India. Then followed the founding of the Neo-Malthusian League in Madras in 1928; the Mysore State's decision of providing birth control advice in State hospitals in 1930; the establishment of the Family Hygiene Society and the *Journal of Marriage Hygiene* in 1935; the nation-wide tour of a prominent international campaigner of birth control, Margaret Sangar, in 1936; and the First Family Hygiene Conference in Bombay in 1938. After independence, the movement culminated in the formation of the Family Planning Association of India in 1951, which in 1952 became one of the affiliates of the newly formed International Planned Parenthood Federation. The basic premise on which this voluntary birth control movement has all along rested is the protection of the individual mother and her children by the prevention through contraception of excessive child bearing. It has ever remained a

humanitarian movement involving mainly the elitist elements in the society

With the launching of planning, however, the initiative in matter of birth control propagation passed on to the Central Government, without involving any discouragement for the voluntary movement. The programme in the First Plan was modest but it did lay down guidelines for its future evolution. The principal elements of the programme were (i) provision in government hospitals and health centres of advice on methods of family planning for married persons who require such advice, (ii) field experiments of different methods of family planning for determining their suitability, acceptability and effectiveness in different sections of the population, and (iii) development of suitable procedures to educate the people on family planning methods. In practice, the emphasis of the programme during the First Plan was on the propagation of the rhythm method.

The Second Plan had sought to lay surer foundations for the execution of the programme. It created a Family Planning Directorate in the Health Ministry and posts of Family Planning Officers at the State level. Its specification of the programme included (i) promotion of family planning knowledge and practice, with emphasis on modern contraception, (ii) establishment of family planning clinics, with a provision for health workers for casework and door to door visits, (iii) distribution of contraceptives through clinics and other agencies, and (iv) promotion of sterilization by providing for free operation facilities, cash compensation for incidental expenses and loss of earnings, and the organisation of mass camps. In substance, this was a clinic approach to the spread of family planning practice.

In the course of the Third Plan, the programme strategy was buttressed by introducing on a nation-wide scale extension education in family planning. Emphasis was now placed on a community acceptance of the small family norm so that group influences are

generated for motivating individual couples to take to family planning. Measures envisaged to help this process were the spread of personal knowledge of family planning methods and the ready availability of the necessary supplies and services. This strategy was designed with the objective of reducing "the birth rate from 40 per thousand to 25 per thousand as expeditiously as possible", and with an ambition to reach 90 per cent of the married population. What created the hope for the success of the programme was the introduction of the IUDC (Intra-Uterine Contraceptive Device or the Loop) in 1965. The organisational set-up too was greatly strengthened by the appointment of Commissioner for Family Planning together with a number of regional directors, by the creation of an infrastructure for training family planning personnel with an autonomous Central Family Planning Institute at its apex, by the establishment of advisory committees for demographic, medical and communication action research as well as a high powered Cabinet Committee for expediting the implementation of the programme.

The promise of the loop did not take too long to evaporate. Thereafter, the programme adopted, in principle, a cafeteria approach, enabling couples to choose from among the variety of available contraceptives the one that suited them the most. In actual practice, its emphasis concentrated more and more on the terminal method of sterilization, especially of the male spouse, though attempts were also made to popularize the use of Nirodh (condom) by enlisting the cooperation of commercial channels for its wide distribution. The emphasis on sterilization greatly facilitated the appearance of the programme as time-bound and target-oriented, with the practice of holding camps and the use of a variety of incentives and disincentives. Performance targets were fixed at the national level in accordance with the specified goal of reducing the birth rate. They were then farmed out all along the line of hierarchical infrastructure set up for the delivery of family planning service.

About the camps, they retained popularity for a while and individually they grew in size attracting at times active involvement of several other government departments handling routine administrative work in their organisation. For example, the famous Ernakulam camp of 1971-72 was organised, under the leadership of the head of the district administration, with a great fanfare in the style of a carnival. The camp style of canvassing family planning acceptance withered away but left behind it an excessive bureaucratisation of the programme which has not only persisted but also dominated it at times. With camps losing importance, the manoeuvrability of the programme was greatly lessened and it came to a virtual standstill in 1973-74. After its disaffection with the loop the programme had, in any case, become increasingly concerned with quantitative achievements leaving an impression that its welfare content had eroded.

Interestingly, however, the undercurrent of concern for the welfare aspects of the programme was quite evident in the Fourth Plan's approach to population control. That plan made family planning a centrally sponsored and financed programme for the ten-year period beginning with the introduction of the plan. Along with this decision, the plan had underscored the need to integrate maternal and child care with family planning by specifically providing for the implementation, through 'family welfare planning' centres, the schemes for (i) prophylaxis against nutritional anemia for mothers and children and (ii) nutritional supplement for overcoming vitamin 'A' deficiency that led to the affliction of blindness among children. This concern for welfare reflected in the plea for integration of family planning with maternal health and child care (MCH) was more clearly reflected in the national programme for minimum needs included as a major component in the Fifth Plan. The inclusion of family planning in combination with MCH in this national programme signified the change of family planning into family welfare planning.

During the Fifth Plan, the political situation in the country took a drastic turn and the government's attention was concentrated on the Prime Minister's welfare-oriented 20-point programme. The situation so created was opportune for launching a vigorous drive for family planning acceptance, which received a boost from the National Population Policy of April 1976. In the pursuit of this drive, the States had vied with each other in fixing ambitious targets for the performance of the sterilization component of the programme and in overfulfilling them. Incentives and disincentives were widely used in the enforcement of the small family norm, especially among the government employees at all levels and among those who were required to deal with the government in diverse fields of their activities. Cooperation in the drive was enlisted from the various departments of the government, including those in charge of law and order. The drive provoked resistance especially in the northern States and led to incidents where force was used. In the mind of the public, family planning came, therefore, to be equated with sterilization, particularly vasectomy, secured through pressure and a great variety of disincentives. The welfare orientation of the programme that had emerged, at least at the conceptual level, in the Fourth and Fifth Plans, was in the process greatly underplayed. Surprisingly, no attempt was even made to tag family planning on to the 20-point programme that was so very apparently addressed to the improvement in the welfare of the poor.

When, after the 1977 general elections, normalcy was restored, the programme fell into a disarray. Emphasis on voluntary acceptance of sterilization was quite in order, but it is inescapable that the manner in which it was sought to be restored led to a considerable loss of vigour and enthusiasm that the administrative machinery in general had displayed earlier. The new government consistently underscored family welfare but it did make it clear also that family planning was no less important. In fact, in order to raise the

morale of the programme personnel, the new Prime Minister had himself sent personal communications pleading with the concerned staff and the local leadership that family planning *per se* was one of the most urgent tasks before his government. The government was at the same time in search for a broader welfare frame within which family planning could be promoted more effectively, it is for this purpose that the reconstituted Planning Commission had set up the working group on population policy, referred to earlier.

In the course of the programme's development from the middle sixties onwards, several special schemes and supportive measures have been introduced from time to time in order to buttress its performance. The more important of the special schemes include intensified promotion of family planning in the organised sector including a few leading business houses, the defence services, the railways and the postal services, the post-partum programme introduced in 1969 for a hospital-based canvass of family planning among women who came to the hospitals for full-term delivery, abortion or for some other requirement of obstetric treatment; and the India population project launched in 1973, at the instance and financial assistance of the World Bank, in five contiguous districts of Karnataka and six districts of Uttar Pradesh, in order to experiment with the packaging of contraception with intensive nutritional care of mothers and children, along with the creation of a more modern physical infrastructure comprising mainly of buildings. Notable supportive measures are the more recent strengthening of the MCH component of primary health care; the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1972, which legalized abortion on the ground, among others, of the failure of contraception; and the Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act of 1978, which raised the legal minimum age of marriage from 15 to 18 for girls and from 18 to 21 for boys and made its infringement a cognizable offence.

The Sixth Plan (1980-85) recognises that

"the non-attainment of the birth rate targets adopted in the Plans is largely on account of our inability to carry forward the programme throughout the country with the active involvement of the people. Public enthusiasm and community participation in the programme which is necessary for its success has not been generated in adequate measure. The Plan's strategy for achieving the objective of limiting the growth of population is persuasion of people to adopt the small family norm voluntarily backed by appropriate programmes of supplies and services for contraception. Family planning programme has also to be made a part of the total national effort for providing a better life to the people. In the programmes of family planning an integrated approach and coordination of activities is envisaged. Besides the official extension agencies, all channels of communication available, including youth organisations, Mahila Mandals, voluntary organisation, etc., are to be fully exploited. In the Public Sector an outlay of Rs 1,010 crores has been provided for family planning programmes²

THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME

The programme has become a huge country-wide undertaking of the Union Government run by its Ministry of Health and Family Planning, or Family Welfare. The measurement of its performance could be a straightforward quantitative exercise but the assessment of its achievements inevitably involves subjective judgement. To minimize this subjective element, we will here confine ourselves to the official returns received by the Ministry from all over the country, as published in a processed form in the official year-books on the subject. We depend in this regard mainly on the year-books for the years 1978-79³ and 1979-80⁴. We will refer here specifically to the finances of the programme, its country-wide infrastructure developed for delivering family planning services together with its complement of institutionalised research and training facilities, the relative importance

of the different family planning methods in its kitty; and its achievements expressed in terms of couples protected, births averted and the estimation of the resulting change in birth rates. The achievements so measured are admittedly inadequate to indicate the extent to which the programme has contributed to the welfare of families it has helped to limit their size. Such a qualitative assessment of the programme's performance remains, and will ever remain, a matter of individual opinion.

The finances of the programme, borne almost wholly by the Union Government, form a part of the health budget, which improved its share in the aggregate of government budgets from about 3.5 per cent in the early years of planning to 4.7 per cent in the more recent years. The family planning component formed less than 1.0 per cent of the health budget in the First Plan period; its share improved to 3.5 per cent in the Third and to about 13.0 per cent in the Fourth and also in the Fifth Plan. The family planning expenditure has normally formed about half a per cent in the aggregate of all governmental expenditures. The programme cannot, therefore, be said to have faced any serious constraint in the matter of making financial resources available for its implementation.

In absolute terms, there has been, ever since its inception, a progressive increase in the financial resources devoted to the programme. Its Plan outlays increased from a nominal sum of Rs. 65 lakhs in the First to Rs. 4.97 crores in the Second and Rs. 26.98 crores in the Third Plan and further to Rs. 330.0 crores and Rs. 497.36 crores in the Fourth and the Fifth Plan respectively. The Sixth Plan (1980-85) outlay is Rs. 1,010 crores. Actual expenditure measured, however, only 22.3 per cent of the outlays in the First and 43.3 per cent in the Second Plan. This proportion improved to 92.1 per cent in the Third and 99.5 per cent in the Fourth Plan. Then the aggregate expenditure for the four years of the prematurely terminated Fifth Plan exceeded the outlays by as much as 43.0 per cent. In the years 1978-79 and 1979-80 taken together the

expenditure (Rs. 226 crores) was only marginally short of the outlay (Rs. 228 crores).

Annual figures for the period following the end of the Third Plan, during which the tempo of the programme had progressively heightened, indicate an upswing of outlays from 14.93 crores in 1966-67 to Rs. 111.81 crores in 1978-79. The corresponding increase of expenditures was from Rs. 13.43 crores to 107.54 crores. The level of utilisation of outlays had improved from 89.4 per cent in 1966-67 to 94.0 per cent in 1970-71. There then followed a six years' phase of intensification of the programme, in which annual expenditures persistently exceeded the outlays; the excess in fact mounted up from only 1.9 per cent of the outlays in 1971-72 to an abnormally high level of 146.6 per cent in 1976-77. In the latter year, the programme's performance had reached its zenith, with the expenditures amounting to Rs. 172.98 crores as against the outlays of Rs. 70.14 crores. Outlays did not, in that extraordinary year, act as a constraint on expenditures. The tempo of the programme soon abated and for the next two years, the excess of expenditure was replaced by shortfalls of the order of around 5.0 per cent in the utilisation of comparatively smaller outlays. During 1979-80 expenditure amounted to Rs. 118.51 crores as against the outlay of Rs. 116.19 crores.

The programme has from time to time enjoyed the benefit of financial assistance from external sources. The proportion of external assistance in total expenditures on the programme has varied from year to year. The scale of external assistance for the programme has increased in more recent years from Rs. 7.78 crores in 1974-75 to Rs. 13.27 crores in 1976-77, Rs. 20.01 crores in 1977-78 and Rs. 24.48 crores in 1978-79. It was 22.27 crores in 1979-80. In 1978-79 external assistance formed the highest ever proportion of 22.8 per cent in the total expenditure on the programme. In the year 1979-80 external assistance was 18.8 per cent of the total expenditure.

The process of building up the necessary infrastructure of physical facilities had begun

with the Second Plan's adoption of the 'clinic approach', envisaging the creation of a network of family planning (or welfare) centres and sub-centres, to envelop the country. So begun, the task of constructing this infrastructure has been carried forward with increasing earnestness, even though the clinic approach was successively so modified as to emphasize extension education in early sixties, target setting in the late sixties and the holding of camps in early seventies. In the result, we have today a sprawling hierarchical delivery system with the Health Ministry's Department of Family Planning at its apex and rural family planning sub-centres at the grass roots level. Below the family planning department at the Centre, the system comprised towards the end of 1978, 16 State secretariat cells, 25 State Family Planning Bureaus, 358 District Family Planning Bureaus, with a complement of 199 mobile units, 1,986 Urban Planning Centres (1,957 on 30 September 1979), 5,397 Rural Family Planning Centres (5,358 on 30 June 1979), 42,875 Rural Family Planning Sub-centres (46,564 on 30 June 1979), 524 Post Partum Centres and 46 Health and Family Planning Training Centres. That the reach of the system is even so inadequate is easily shown by a shortfall of over 20 per cent in the setting up of rural sub-centres according to the official specification of the need for one sub-centre for a rural population of ten thousand.

The operation of the system has not been that easy or smooth. This is broadly reflected in the chronic incidence of vacancies of sanctioned posts and in the mounting shortage of buildings required for both functional and residential purposes. In the overall, the 1978 vacancies measured 21.2 per cent of the sanctioned posts. Of the total sanctioned strength, the proportion of the staff in position was then 86.3 per cent for the State secretariat cells, 66.3 per cent for the State Bureaus, 79.3 per cent for the District Bureaus, 81.8 per cent for the Training Centres, 62.0 per cent for the Post Partum Centres, 84.9 per cent for the Urban Centres run by the State governments and 79.7 per cent for the Rural Centres and

Sub-centres. The more crucial are shortages of medical, paramedical and other specialized categories of personnel, viz. medical officers, extension educators, lady health visitors, auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs) and family planning health assistants, which together formed over 81 per cent of the sanctioned strength. All these categories of staff share the incidence of vacancies in respect of the preponderant rural component of the system, this incidence in 1978 was 2.1 per cent for ANMs, 14.9 per cent for medical officers, 17.3 per cent for extension educators, 28.6 per cent for lady health visitors and 38.3 per cent for health assistants. The comparative position for the urban centres was better, except for the category of lady health visitors, that showed vacancies of as much as 44.3 per cent of the sanctioned posts, interestingly the number of medical officers here exceeded the sanctioned strength by about 6 per cent.

The provision of buildings has consistently lagged behind the requirement resulting in the cumulation of a considerable backlog. In 1977, there were 5,200 rural centres, while the number of buildings completed according to specifications laid down for the purpose was 2,473 and 514 additional units were under construction. Further, the construction of 100 more units was approved under the budget for 1977-78. Assuming that these were completed on schedule, the shortage of buildings still amounted to as much as 42 per cent of the minimum requirement. Similarly, the rural part of the delivery system has not been adequately served by the much-needed availability of motor vehicles. Of the 5,304 rural centres, more than 1,300 of them had no vehicle at their disposal in 1978. On the whole, while the reach of the system is not yet all-embracing, the logistics necessary for its satisfactory performance too are well below the mark and for this state of affairs, reasons other than the financial are responsible.

Research and training has received some emphasis from the beginning of population policy in the First Plan. In the matter of

training, the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare (or Planning) undertakes training and research programmes, apart from overseeing the functioning of the 46 training centres referred to earlier. Another centre at Bombay, the International Institute for Population Studies, established under the joint auspices of the Government of India and the United Nations, is devoted to teaching of technical demography and population studies, it receives students from several of the developing countries of the ESCAP region. Research is carried out also in the two population research centres (one at Bangalore and the other at Lucknow), attached to the World Bank's India population project, they form inbuilt components of the project. Further, there is in each State a demographic and evaluation cell to carry out programme related research as well as to compile statistical data on the performance of the programme in the State. There are finally some 17 population research centres widely spread over the country in universities or State departments of statistics, by and large, they are autonomous in the sense that they design and carry out their own research programmes. Their broad terms of reference are to investigate and report on social, economic and demographic factors affecting trends in fertility, mortality and migration. There has been, of late, a move to expand this research network so as to have at least one population research centre in each State.

In regard to family planning methods, the emphasis shifted at the end of First Plan to more modern contraceptives; sterilization appeared on the scene in the Second Plan and the IUCD; even more forcefully, at the end of the Third Plan. Thereafter, the programme emphasized the cafeteria approach, the methods included therein were vasectomy, tubectomy, IUCD, condom (bearing the catchy name of Nirodh), diaphragm, jelly or cream, foam tablets, rhythm, etc. Oral pills were introduced later and the injectiles, morning-after pills and implants are as yet in the offing. The method-wise performance data

are classified into sterilizations, IUCDs, and conventional contraceptives which cover all the rest of the methods mentioned above. The total acceptors are accordingly identified by sterilizations, IUCD insertions and equivalent conventional contraceptive (C.C.) users.⁵ The total number of acceptors were 7,153 in 1956; it increased rather slowly during the Second Plan to reach a level of 64,338 in 1960 and then jumped upto 1,57,947 in 1962, all these related only to the terminal method of sterilization. From 1963 onwards, equivalent C.C. users were taken into account, and from 1965 also the IUCD insertions. There was, therefore, an escalation in the number to 4,67,859 in 1963, 7,08,468 in 1964 and 20,65,677 in the period from January 1965 to March 1966, marking the switchover in reporting from the calendar to the fiscal year. Thereafter, the number progressively increased to reach a level of 58,74,384 in 1972-73. This was followed by a decrease to 43,07,428 in 1974-75 and then by a quantum jump to 1,25,34,164 in 1976-77, followed in turn by an equally sharp fall to 45,27,019 in 1977-78. There was some retrieval of the fall in 1978-79, which recorded a total of 55,05,000 acceptors. The number of acceptors in 1979-80 is estimated at 54,43,000.

About the relative importance of the three categories of methods, equivalent C.C. users formed a sizable proportion in the total acceptors in all years of the period barring some exceptions. When, in 1963, they were for the first time taken into account, they formed 63.6 per cent of the total, their proportion was reduced successively to 28.3, 20.6 and 15.9 in the three years of 1965-66, 1966-67 and 1967-68, when the IUCD had acquired prominence. Thereafter, their proportion in the total improved to 52.1 per cent in 1970-71 and 69.6 per cent in 1973-74; it was however, reduced to 29.5 per cent in 1976-77 when the sterilization had been vigorously pursued. It sharply rose to 71.8 per cent in 1977-78 and was 63.4 per cent in the year 1978-79. The IUCDs accounted for 39.3 per cent of the total in 1965-66, the first year of their introduction, and 40.2 per cent in 1966-67. Thereafter, its

proportion was progressively reduced to 6.1 per cent in 1972-73 and it was, at the lowest, 4.6 per cent in 1976-77. Sterilizations accounted for 36.4 per cent, to begin with, in 1963. Their share varied from year to year, the largest being 65.9 per cent in 1976-77 and the next lower figure of 61.7 per cent in 1967-68. Relative importance of sterilizations had markedly decreased in 1973-74 and in 1977-78, in the former year they claimed 21.8 per cent and in the latter, 21.0 per cent of total acceptors. In the year 1978-79, their share had improved to 27.0 per cent. This share for 1979-80 is estimated at 32.6 per cent.

The effectiveness of protection against the risk of pregnancy varies from one to another method. Among them sterilization is almost foolproof, in fact it terminates the risk for the rest of the couple's reproductive period. The IUCD is quite effective during the period it is retained in position by the woman. The conventional contraceptives vary among them in effectiveness and call for continuous unflinching use. Total number of acceptors, therefore, is a gross figure, which fails to indicate the effectiveness with which births are prevented by methods other than sterilization. Therefore, an estimation is called for in order to indicate effective protection in terms of what has been called equivalent sterilizations. For this purpose, assumed fractions of acceptors of other categories of methods are added to the number of sterilizations, the fraction used for IUCD is 1/3 and for equivalent C/C users 1/18. The annual number of equivalent sterilizations performed, as estimated on this basis was 1,86,780 in 1963 as against the count of 4,67,859 acceptors of all methods. This number increased to 12,16,421 in 1966-67. Thereafter, it has kept on varying from year to year reaching its highest level of 86,63,106 in 1976-77. Taking the figure of 1966-67 as the base, it is found to have been 72 per cent higher in 1967-68, 177 per cent higher in 1972-73 and as much as 612 per cent higher in the peak year of 1976-77. In the very next year, it was only about 2 per cent higher but in 1978-79 it was 54 per cent higher. The number

of equivalent sterilizations has never been smaller than that of 1966-67 in the succeeding years, though it was quite close to the latter figure in 1973-74 and 1977-78.

Among the three categories of methods, sterilization stands out as by far the most preponderant method. In 1963 and 1964 it accounted for over 91 per cent of equivalent sterilizations. This proportion was reduced to 68.4 per cent in 1965-66, when IUCD was introduced, thereafter, it rose to 88.1 per cent in 1968-69, 92.5 per cent in 1972-73 and 95.4 per cent in 1976-77. The share of IUCDs was as much as 27.8 per cent of equivalent sterilizations in 1965-66, the year of its introduction. From that level, it was rapidly reduced to 8.5 per cent in 1968-69, it varied thereafter from year to year, recording as low a level as 3.5 per cent in 1972-73 and 2.2 per cent in 1976-77. The share of conventional contraceptives' use was only 3.3 per cent of equivalent sterilizations in 1966-67, it fell to 1.2 per cent in 1967-68 but was afterwards as high as 13.6 per cent in 1973-74 and 14.9 per cent in 1977-78. In the year, 1978-79, the relative shares of the three categories of methods in the total of equivalent sterilizations were 79 per cent sterilizations, 10 per cent, IUCD insertions, and 11 per cent, equivalent C/C users, including those taking oral pills. In the year 1979-80, it is estimated that of the 21,58,000 equivalent sterilizations, sterilization accounted for 82 per cent, IUCD insertions for 8 per cent and equivalent C/C users including equivalent oral pill users 10 per cent.⁶

Sterilizations include vasectomies of males and tubectomies of females. During the entire period from 1956 to 1979-80 nearly 3 crore sterilizations have been performed as a part of the family planning programme. Of these, 33.7 per cent are tubectomies. Male sterilization has preponderated in the period considered as a whole. The proportion of tubectomies in total sterilizations has varied from year to year, generally according to the tempo of the programme's performance. In earlier years, tubectomies predominated but gradually they yielded ground to vasectomies. From their

share of nearly 70 per cent of all sterilizations in 1957, tubectomies suffered a fall in proportion to a level of only 10.4 per cent in 1967-68, thanks presumably to the alternative female method of IUCD. The share of tubectomies, however, improved quite conspicuously after 1972-73. Even in 1975-76 it was as much as 46.1 per cent. The highest share of 80.2 was claimed by tubectomies, however, in 1977-78, which has been seen as a year of backlash following the intensity of the 1976-77 sterilization drive. In the year of 1978-79, which recorded a significant pick-up of the sterilization programme, tubectomies still accounted for as much as 73.7 per cent of the total sterilizations. In the year 1979-80, tubectomies are estimated to account for 73.4 per cent of the total sterilization.

The family planning programme has had the benefit of the practice of method-wise target setting from 1969-70 onwards. The targets were in no case sacrosanct but they were meant to boost the morale of the field personnel and guide them in their performance. In fixing the targets for any year, the actual performance of the preceding years would appear to have formed a consistent basis. Apart from this, the assessment of the situation in different parts of the country by those involved in the programme too was taken into consideration. Targets were more often accepted than imposed, or were decided by consultations among the functionaries involved in implementing the programme. The shortfall in achievement of the target shows quite an erratic trend in respect of the principal method of sterilization; of the ten years for which targets of sterilizations have been reported, in seven years the achievement was much below the target; it measured 37.4 per cent of the target in 1978-79, 41.6 per cent in 1973-74 and 58.2 per cent in 1979-80. Achievement, on the other hand, exceeded the target by 5.2 per cent in 1971-72, 7.1 per cent in 1975-76 and as much as 92.2 per cent in 1976-77. For the IUCD, the perennial shortfall measured, at the minimum, 8.0 per cent of target in 1978-79; and, at the maximum, 67.4 per cent in 1977-78. This

shortfall was 44.8 per cent in 1979-80. With regard to C.C. users, achievement has remained below the target in all years but comparative performance here appears to be somewhat better and steadier. Only in one of the eleven years, 1970-71, the achievement has been less than half of the target, it has been 70 per cent or higher in five of the remaining ten years; it was as high as 87 per cent in 1978-79. In the year 1979-80, the achievement was 52.2 per cent of the target. On the whole, shortfalls in the achievement of targets have, however, been too numerous to lend credibility to the exercise of method-wise target setting.

We now turn to the number and proportion of eligible couples (those with the female spouse in the reproduction span of age from 15 to 44 years), effectively protected against the risk of pregnancy. In the case of sterilization, the protection starts almost from the time of operation and lasts thereafter for the rest of life. In the case of other methods, it depends on the continuity and regularity of efficient use; in their case a distinction is made between current use and effective protection on the basis of observed use-effectiveness of the method in question. The aggregate of couples effectively protected comprised all sterilized couples, 95 per cent of IUCD users and 50 per cent of the users of conventional contraception. For a given year, the couples effectively protected are estimated on the basis of the entry of new acceptors and attrition during the year in the total of couples previously protected from such reasons as probability of demise of either spouse, the discontinuance of use of non-terminal methods and the female spouse passing off from the reproductive span of life. Normally, the number of couples effectively protected could be expected to increase according to the tempo of programme's performance but in times when the programme's pace slows down, the attrition tends to exceed the entry of new acceptors, leading to a decrease in number from one year to the next.

The decrease in the number of couples effectively protected had appeared only once in

1977-78, the year of backlash, during the period from 1966-67 to 1979-80 in the case of sterilization, in the case of IUCD, there was a progressive decrease from its peak year of 1967-68 to 1974-75 and a decrease also in 1977-78, while for the users of conventional contraceptives, it was recorded in 1974-75, 1977-78 and 1979-80. The aggregate of couples effectively protected had progressively increased from 36 lakhs in 1966-67 to 2.53 crores in 1976-77, it decreased to 2.46 crores in 1977-78 but showed an increase to 2.50 crores in 1978-79, and over 2.53 crores in 1979-80. It is notable that a reduction of 6.57 lakhs in 1977-78 was made up of a decrease of 2.52 lakhs in sterilizations, 1.95 lakhs in IUCDs and 2.10 lakhs in C.C. users.

During the period 1966-79, the number of eligible couples is estimated to have increased from around 8.6 crores to 11.0 crores, reflecting the enduring acceleration of population growth witnessed in the preceding decade and a half. The proportion of eligible couples effectively protected had progressively increased during the period from only 4.2 per cent to 22.8 per cent. The increase in this proportion was quite rapid upto 1972-73 and moderate thereafter till it jumped up suddenly to a peak of 23.9 per cent in 1976-77. There immediately followed a decrease to 22.3 per cent in 1977-78, which was also the proportion for the final year 1978-79. Obviously, sterilization has all along accounted for the best part of this proportion, in 1966-67, 4.2 per cent of effective protection was made up of 2.5 per cent sterilizations, 1.4 per cent IUCD and 0.3 per cent C.C. users. In the year 1979-80, 20.2 per cent sterilizations, 1.0 per cent IUCDs and 1.4 per cent CC users combined to effectively protect 22.6 per cent of the 11.22 crores eligible couples. Without sterilizations, the performance of the programme would pale into insignificance.

We may finally refer to the translation of effective protection of the couples against the risk of pregnancy into what has been called births averted. The estimation of the avoided probability of live births is obviously based on

the fertility experience of comparable couples, especially in respect of age, who continue to reproduce without taking recourse to contraception. The available time series of births averted begins with 1960-61, for which year the estimate of births averted was 33,500 only. Since then the annual number of births averted record a continual increase to reach a level of 50.5 lakhs in 1977-78. The year 1979-80 records a decrease to 49.1 lakhs. The cumulative total of births averted during the period 1960-80 is 392 lakhs, 318 lakhs of these averted births are attributed to sterilizations, 37 lakhs to IUCD insertions and 37 lakhs to the use of conventional contraceptives. Sterilizations were thus responsible for over 80 per cent of births averted during the period.

It may be noted *inter alia* that apart from prevention of pregnancy through contraception, there has been available, since 1972, the facility of legally terminating pregnancies. The extent to which abortions conducted under the provisions of the M.T.P. Act represent resort to this method for limiting the size of family is uncertain, it is possible that the Act has served to bring on to surface a part of abortions which would have been conducted any way though in a clandestine fashion. What is significant, however, is the increase in the number of abortions under the Act with the expansion of the necessary medical facilities. During 1972-75, the M.T.P. cases recorded were only 93,401, this number rose to 205,188 in 1975-76 and to 278,870 in 1976-77. A smaller figure of 247,049 was recorded in the next year 1977-78. During 1972-80, an aggregate of 15,82,764 pregnancies were prevented from terminating into live births under the liberalised provision of the M.T.P. Act. It is significant that the proportion of pregnancies terminated on the ground failure of contraception was 42.6 per cent for the initial period of 1972 to 1975 and 47.7 per cent in the year of 1978-79.

It is evident that the prevention of births through contraception on the scale noted above had affected the time trend in the national birth rate, if in any given period it did

not result in a decrease in the birth rate, it did probably prevent an increase. The size of the difference in the birth rate that can be so attributed to the quantum of births averted by the programme remains largely a matter of speculation. The Ministry's claims are in this regard quite modest

In each fiscal year, the birth rate so estimated on the basis of the births averted by the programme is reported to be in close correspondence with the rate estimated by the SRS for the relevant calendar year. The SRS rates, as noted earlier, show a more or less progressive decrease for the seventies, the decrease has been from 36.9 in 1971 to 32.9 in 1977. This trend does not, however, lend any confidence in the feasibility of attaining the specific goal of reduction in the birth rate to a level of 25 per thousand by 1983-84.

ON THE FUTURE PROSPECTS

In the narration of the past in the preceding pages, we had the advantage of a reasonably well-recorded hindsight. It has lessons for the future but that does not render the consideration of what is in store any less speculative. This is particularly true of population in the current context of social malaise and uneasy state of the economy. What is quite certain is that population will continue to grow for a long time to come because of the momentum it has acquired in the course of the last three decades. It is also certain that this population growth will continue to compound problems in the political, social and economic fields. That the official effort to contain population growth should be continued need not, therefore, be questioned, even though the handling of the problem has not so far produced any sought-for miracle. While admitting the need for an official family planning delivery system, the one lesson that stands out clearly is that it is too much to expect the delivery system to materialise the desired result on its own. As the experience has shown, direct action on the fertility component of population growth is

likely to prove counter-productive. But to do nothing for securing the needed modification of fertility behaviour would also constitute, on the part of the government, an abdication of responsibility for the future of the society. The matter of future prospects is not, thus, policy-neutral; the resolution of the problem of population growth would inevitably depend on the strategy of official intervention designed for the purpose. In this regard, it is abundantly clear that the strategy should squarely rest on a deeper appreciation of the more basic determinants of population growth and so also of the trends of its mortality and fertility components.

The question of prospects is, therefore, one of feasibility supported by application of policy options that are available to the government. We will go along, in this regard, with the Planning Commission's Working Group on Population Policy in holding that it is feasible for this country to attain at the national level a net reproduction rate of unity at the turn of the century. The national population then would be of the order of 91.3 crores, with around 15 crores eligible couples, of whom 9 crores, or 60 per cent, would have to be effectively protected by different methods of contraception. To manage nearly a three-fold increase in the number of effectively protected couples in the course of the next 20 years or so appears to be quite a stupendous task but it cannot be taken to be impossible. The task would require a rather fundamental change in our approach to the population problem. But this need not involve forsaking the achievements in developing the family planning delivery system; in fact there is a strong case for expanding the system and to improve, to the maximum possible extent, the logistics of its operation.

It is, however, necessary to integrate the delivery of family planning not merely with MCH but with an effective all-embracing comprehensive primary health care. This integration is necessary at all the different levels from the Union Ministry to the Primary Health Centres and Sub-Centres operating at the

grass-roots level Like the family planning system, the primary health care system too suffers from deficiencies in infrastructure development and inadequacies of logistics The health and medical care delivery is vital for acceptance of family planning for the very reason that its ineffectiveness has halted the improvement in mortality conditions during the seventies In fact, there is a danger of the death rate rising again. The downward course of mortality has been unevenly shared as between different age-sex groups and infant, childhood and maternal mortality rates are still too high to generate assurance that there is no more any need to hedge against their incidence through excessive procreation.

The improvements in these delivery systems may help to reach those who feel the need for family limitation but are prevented from practising it for a variety of reasons like lack of information and opportunity. This, however, is not enough The crucial question is how to generate a new demand for family planning which may be met from within or outside the programme. Here, it is the development strategy that needs to be suitably modified in order to bring into operation its linkages with the generation of fertility decline In the final analysis, it is a question of modification of motivations that lead couples to undertake excessive procreation These linkages are embedded in the political, social and economic fields that condition behaviour of individual couples in their family formation activity It is here that family welfare comes into its own and should, therefore, take precedence over family planning which has come to be identified with control of fertility through modern contraception What we need, then, is a family welfare oriented development strategy that would help to create the atmosphere for wide generation of attitudes favourable to family planning acceptance That means that the hitherto neglected social and 'human' component of the development process should receive greater attention though not necessarily at the cost of its economic component. Economic development itself needs to be

oriented in this regard to the distributional or human welfare aspects away from its exclusive concern with output growth It would be unfortunate if the 'welfare' content of 'Family Welfare Planning' continued to suffer neglect as hitherto it has

P B DESAI

NOTES

- 1 *Sixth Five Year Plan, 1980-85*, Government of India, Planning Commission, New Delhi, p 20
- 2 *Ibid*, pp 374-375
- 3 *Family Welfare Programme in India, Year Book 1978-79*, Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Family Welfare, New Delhi
- 4 *Family Welfare Programme in India, Year Book 1979-80*, Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Family Welfare, New Delhi
- 5 The number of equivalent C C users is computed on the basis of the offtake of condoms, diaphragms, jelly or cream tubes, foam tablets by applying weights corresponding to the quantities required by an average couple in a year for complete protection
- 6 Equivalent sterilizations have been calculated by revised formula by adding the number of sterilization, 1/3 the number of IUCD, 1/18 the number of equivalent C C users and 1/9 the number of equivalent oral pill users

FIELD COUNSELLING

The term 'Field Counselling' generally refers to the process of professional guidance offered to personnel in the agencies operating in the field Field counselling may be related to actual work situations, programme development, mobilisation of resources or other field requirements Its primary purpose is to improve standards of welfare services offered

to the client system. The major tool of field counselling is verbal transaction, wherein a qualified, skilled and experienced professional person seeks to sensitise the counsellee (individual or group) to his designated role, and improves/enhances his job performance for effective service delivery. Field counselling is a two way process based upon positive relationship between the counsellor and the counsellee.

Field counselling may be geared to individual cases, programmes or policy depending upon the level of the counsellee in the administrative hierarchy of the counsellee agency. It will have a quicker payoff if directed to key persons such as the office-bearers, executives, etc. as they manage the agency's policies, procedures and programmes. Further, their motivation and increased receptivity for change and innovation would percolate more easily to others at a lower level. Their involvement and positive attitude towards field counselling is, therefore, highly conducive to effective work with administrative and service personnel in the agency.

Field counselling is not merely a problem-oriented service to be used by the agencies whenever difficulties arise. It also has preventive and developmental goals. Its aim should be to stimulate the counsellee with new perspectives in methods of programming, financing, utilising community resources, etc. Thus field counselling aims not only at enabling individuals and groups in the counsellee agency to realize and use their potentials fully but also enables the counsellee agency to utilise effectively human and material resources within the agency and the community. The essence of field counselling is a natural sincere relationship based on mutual respect and the faith that the individual has the potential to learn, grow and change. According to one approach, field counselling should be staff rather than line oriented, involving no direct administrative responsibility for work outcome. This is considered essential to help the field counsellor maintain an independent status, even though

he may be a part of the agency structure or introduced into it through administrative sanction. His authority is derived from his expertise and skills as well as the administrative sanction. The other approach stresses that the field counsellor as a professional person is not only committed to the values and ethics of professional social work, but has responsibility for their actualisation in practice by using his cumulative knowledge, skills and experiences as an expert. According to this approach, the field counsellor's problem solving and problem defining tasks cannot remain completely neutral.

NEED FOR FIELD COUNSELLING

Field counselling is the outcome of increasing specialisation and growing emphasis on staff and programme development in the context of an increasing variety and complexity of social services. Voluntary agencies do not always have trained personnel due to their traditional bias for voluntary workers, financial constraints and inability to spare their limited number of paid workers for training. Further, wherever professionally trained social workers are employed, their work load is heavy and they have to manage on their own, with little or no supervision in the agency. Under these circumstances, field counselling can be an indispensable service to improve and extend the quality of professional functioning of the agency staff and thereby improve the standards of services they render.

FIELD COUNSELLING IN U K AND U S A

Field counselling in the United Kingdom is not a separate entity but is built into the administrative structure, as a part of the supervisory process. The supervision, as in the case of field counselling, is time-bound and task oriented. A senior, professionally qualified and experienced person is usually in charge of a unit of junior field level workers. He is responsible for both staff and programme development. He is given

opportunities to sharpen his knowledge and skills in supervision and counselling through short-term advanced courses, seminars, workshops, etc. Field consultations are arranged on multi-disciplinary basis whenever required. The administrative status and authority in such cases have both positive and negative implications. Negatively, it cannot be as free and neutral as in the case of a field counsellor who enters the agency from outside and has primary responsibility of counselling. Further, responsibilities and accountability for programme implementation as well as staff evaluation can create constraints in relationships with the field staff. The field staff also may feel inhibited due to their position in the administrative hierarchy and their accountability to the supervisors. The extent to which it becomes a problem solving process based on positive teaching-learning relationships will depend upon the personality, maturity, skill and approach of the supervisor.

In the context of social services in U S A , the term 'Field Consultant' has been used. Its nature, scope and functions have been similar to those in field counselling. It has existed along with agency supervision. Field consultation in social work literature has been defined in different ways as an 'area of practice', a 'skill or technique', 'process or method', 'a functional specialty', etc. Administrative consultation as used in public welfare services for upgrading the field staff is different from case consultation offered to professionally trained and experienced supervisors, with focus on individual cases, and consultation in health services (physical and mental) having an inter-disciplinary approach. Historically, professional interest in field consultation in U S A emerged in response to social work concerns and needs. Public welfare and medical social work were the first to show interest in consultation. The focus of concern in both moved from

individuals to groups. Field consultation has been sought not only for staff development but also for programme planning and policy formulation. Thus, while in public welfare, field consultation was related to public accountability and the need for upgrading the staff through inservice training, in hospitals, schools and other institutions, which are secondary settings, field consultation was primarily geared to the use of collaborative inter-disciplinary approach leading to sharpening of professional competence.

With practitioners in community organisation, field consultation has the primary objective of integrating horizontal approach, involving coordination between participating social welfare agencies, and eventually widening to include broader social policy issues, advocacy, social action, social planning, etc. Thus, field consultation in U S A has focussed on (i) casework consultation, (ii) administrative consultation, and (iii) consultation having preventive, renewal and developmental goals of the wider community. Case consultation has been offered by senior and experienced supervisors.

Manpower shortage in public services, such as physical and mental health, contributed to development of mental health consultants whose primary task has been to provide on the job training and general professional supervision to lone professional functionaries and the moral support needed by most persons working with emotionally disturbed and mentally ill persons.

The third development has been related to growing awareness of the social work profession of the need to formulate new approaches to preventive and developmental goals.

Objectives in field consultation in U S A thus range from enhancing professional competence and helping solve specific work

problems in relation to cases, action or programme development, to upgrading the functioning of unequipped or under-equipped personnel through inservice training and counselling

FIELD COUNSELLING IN INDIA

Social welfare in India has developed during the five year plans to cover a wide range of services directed towards the physically and the socially handicapped, the unadjusted and maladjusted and women, children and the elderly from the under-privileged sections of society. The emphasis now is on preventive and developmental services in addition to improving the curative and rehabilitative services so that individuals and groups are able to realise their potentialities for development. They are implemented by Departments of Social Welfare at the Centre and in the States, the Central Social Welfare Board and State Welfare Advisory Boards, and voluntary organisations. Personnel recruited for the purpose show a wide range. While some have no training in social work, the training of others ranges from a week to a year and, in some cases, includes a degree course in social work. Social workers whether fully or partially trained or untrained, once employed on jobs, are more or less on their own. There is limited supervision or guidance in the professional sense. The emphasis has been more on inspection than on counselling.

As early as in 1959, the Study Team on Social Welfare and the Welfare of Backward Classes appointed by the Planning Commission emphasized the need for an organised field counselling service to voluntary agencies aided by the Central Social Welfare Board to ensure that the resources provided are effectively utilised.¹

The Grant-in-Aid Code Committee appointed in 1959 by the Central Social

Welfare Board recommended certain minimum standards to be followed by grant receiving welfare agencies and strongly emphasized that a field counselling service should be developed for effective implementation of the minimum standards.²

The Child Care Committee, appointed in 1960, categorically emphasized that a competent guidance and counselling service should be created in each State consisting of Field Guides and Counsellors to assist the State's and voluntary child welfare programmes.³ The Committee for Review and Evaluation of Programmes appointed in 1964 reemphasized the need for counselling services to promote the programmes of welfare agencies, and to ensure their continuous improvement. It further suggested that a panel of consultants should be formed to advise the Board on its expanding programmes and services.⁴ These recommendations were further supported by the Study Team of the Central Social Welfare Board in 1969. It stated that in the absence of an adequate inspecting machinery combined with the lack of a field counselling service, periodic and regular visits to the agencies so essential for their continuing and effective development could not be possible.⁵ In 1973, the Central Social Welfare Board appointed a Committee for Pilot Project on Field Counselling Service. A time-bound pilot project in field counselling was instituted in two districts of Maharashtra.

The Committee *inter alia* recommended necessary measures (i) to develop a field counselling service in a phased manner, (ii) to develop criteria for selection of a few States in initiating field counselling service and recruit personnel for training; (iii) to develop a curriculum for a year's intensive supervised training in field counselling in collaboration with selected schools of social work (a course structure was also suggested); (iv) to develop a cadre of field counsellors with post-graduate

professional degrees in social work with a minimum of 5 to 10 years of experience in teaching and/or field practice, and in addition having a year's intensive training in field counselling with field practice, (v) to evolve a clear policy of recruitment of potential field counsellors for (a) post-graduate training in social work and (b) intensive one year training in field counselling, (vi) to evolve and maintain a workable ratio of field counsellors to the number of counsellee agencies and the staff therein to ensure specified standards and quality of field counselling service, (vii) to undertake ongoing research regarding effectiveness of field counselling service

The field counselling project thus represented culmination of earlier recommendations. It was therefore seen as an important step in the development of field counselling service in India.⁶ However, its recommendations are yet to be implemented.

OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS

The objectives of field counselling service are (i) to increase or supplement knowledge, understanding and skills, (ii) to improve the ability for independent problem solving, (iii) to increase effective inter-relationships, and (iv) to improve and augment organisational functioning and services.

Some of the functions of field counselling are: (i) to study the aims and objectives of counsellee agencies, determine their relevance to emerging community needs and enable them to evolve modifications, changes and/or expansion of their existing services, (ii) to assess each agency's level of functioning in term of service implementation according to the required minimum standards, and maintain or raise its performance. This may be in relation to the development of new objectives, policies, procedures, finance, coordination, etc.; (iii) to develop a clearing and information cell at

Central, State and district level to collect information regarding different types of programmes and procedures for obtaining grants, training facilities, etc., and to develop a library of standard books, resource material for specific services, reports, etc., (iv) to develop inservice and/or refresher courses, workshops, etc., in collaboration with the schools of social work, and (v) to study emerging needs and gaps in services at national, State and local levels and indicate the possible directions for future programmes.

ROLE OF FIELD COUNSELLOR

The field counsellor is expected to combine the roles of a change agent and enabler and a process expert. As change agent and enabler, his role is 'neutral', while as a process expert, he seeks to strengthen the counsellee to undertake his responsibilities effectively. In both, the emphasis is on modification of attitudes and behaviour as well as on imparting knowledge and skills. Further, his role as perceived by him and by others (counsellee as well as administration) is likely to be action-oriented, particularly in situations where concrete targets are expected. Under such circumstances, his effective functioning tends to be measured in terms of quantitative results. As a sensitive teacher and a leader, the field counsellor should relate his counselling skill to his understanding of the counsellee's ego functioning, his social and educational background and the sub-culture of the institutional setting in which he operates. The individual counsellor's role model is likely to be influenced by his methodological training, field of practice, professional image, the demands of the required situation and the conceptual models he has incorporated professionally and temperamentally. Further, it will also determine the choice of the intervention model, such as study-diagnosis-treatment (clinical model), analyse-identify-

teach (educational model), or study-control-prevent (community model). Again, any change occurring from the counselling process would affect all parts of the social system. It is, therefore, essential to visualise the total impact rather than the impact upon the individual counsellor. The field counsellor is expected to clarify continually his role in negotiating and maintaining the counselling relationships at a level beneficial to the counsellor, the counsellor agency and ultimately to the client systems. In short, the field counsellor's role is (i) to clarify, analyse or interpret problems and situations, (ii) to reinforce, corroborate or validate the counsellor's strategies, (iii) to inform, supplement or advise in relation to specific tasks; and (iv) to motivate, facilitate or change the counsellor's level of involvement. One role does not preclude the others though in reality he may place more stress on one at any time depending upon the counselling situation and the counsellor.

METHODS OF FIELD COUNSELLING

Methods of field counselling vary depending upon the counselling situation and whether the unit of counselling is an individual or a group. Some of the principles of social work methods are used and the process of growth in the counsellor system is almost similar to that found in the client system with the difference that the field counsellor is dealing with colleagues or associates having their own independent status and role in the administrative hierarchy and bound by the constraints of the agency's objectives, policies and procedures. It is further influenced by whether it is client/counsellor centred case counselling or counsellor/programme centred administrative counselling. In administrative counselling, the counsellor does not have direct contact with the client system. His effect upon them will depend upon his competence, relationship and influence on service delivery

through his counselling. In case-counselling the field counsellor should be conversant with the dynamics of the specific case situations (problem, case, inter-relationships, etc.) while in administrative counselling he needs to be equipped to enable the counsellor/counsellor agency evolve criteria of effective standards of service, coordination, etc.

Both in the use of individual as well as group counselling methods, there is a preliminary stage involving preparatory meetings with the administrative personnel, the service personnel or a combination of both. This is essential not only for effective staff and administrative involvement from inception but for continuing communication between the two.

THE GROUP METHOD

The greatest advantage of the first of the two methods, namely, the group counselling method is its potential for change in the participants' inter-relationships and attitudes through interaction within the group and interaction of the group with the counsellor.

Consideration of the size of the group, number of sessions, and duration of each, place, time, etc., are important aspects of structuring the field counselling programme with a group at any level. Unlike the individual method, the group method makes greater demands on staff-time to be set aside from the normal tasks of carrying the agency's programmes. Hence, precision in detailed programming is required so that it does not interfere with normal staff functioning.

Group sessions may be tasks or situations oriented to general considerations involving exchange of information, experiences, etc. A short-term group is small and homogeneous and may have 5 to 15 sessions on once a week basis to examine, for example, a common problem. The objectives of the group sessions here would be to examine the factors

contributing to the situation and arrive at quick workable solutions Attendance of all the members at all sessions is important

Long-term groups are large and have more than 15 sessions, once a week or less often Regularity of attendance of all the participants is not absolutely necessary as the focus is on consideration of repetitive and continuing problems An example is of a monthly meeting of the inspectorate staff of the State Welfare Advisory Board with the field counsellor to discuss certain problems related to their specific districts, and exchange information and ideas about the functioning of specific programmes in the districts under their supervision

Effective use of field counselling with a group is greatly dependent upon strict adherence to the time set aside and structuring in advance of the contents of discussions in each session In both short-term and long-term groups, the same group process occurs during each session as well as over the total period of counselling This process includes (i) initial warming up phase, (ii) problem focused phase, and (iii) ending phase The field counsellor must ensure that the group passes through all the phases to ensure effective teaching-learning experience

In the initial warming up phase, success of field counselling depends upon the effective handling of this phase. It marks the beginning of interaction within the group and between the group and the counsellor It is a testing out phase in which curiosity, feeling of anxiety, resistance, etc are expressed The counsellee, during this phase needs help to adapt to new learning situations and to a new counsellor

The second, the problem solving phase, is characterised by (a) sharing of work problems, anxieties, guilt, ambivalence, (b) reality testing through group process and through the counsellor mirroring similar situations and problems to give a clear perspective to the

counsellee, and (c) problem solving through the process of identification with each other, and with the counsellor who is in a position to use positively techniques of counselling such as advice, suggestions, clarifications, assessment of the group process, results achieved, etc

The third phase, the 'ending phase', is determined by the type of counsellee group For example, it is most clear-cut in task-oriented time bound groups in which specific problems are identified for quick solution In group situations involving clearing of problems and situations through administrative interventions or requiring complex motivational and behavioural change, it is likely to be prolonged The ending phase, under any situation, is marked by the counsellor enabling the counsellee to review and assess the counselling process and the benefits derived

INDIVIDUAL METHOD

The individual method of field counselling is primarily based on one to one relationship Its major objective is to give guidance to the counsellee with his individual problems However, it passes through the same phases as in group method and requires the same skill of enabling the individual counsellee to pass through each phase The nature of the counsellor-counsellee relationship is more intense, and may even lead to a type of client-worker relationship in the hands of an inexperienced counsellor The didactic aspect of the relationship is, therefore, extremely important The skill in use of case or group method greatly depends upon the counsellor's interest, training and experience. The individual method provides greater opportunity for discussions in depth of counselling content and can be of great help in developing insights into the processes of attitudinal and behavioural modifications and changes The individual method could also be helpful with

personnel at executive level, such as directors, superintendents, etc., to review critically concepts primarily concerned with human relationships and thereby help improve the emotional climate in the work setting; to attend to individual staff problems interfering with their effective functioning; to gain specific technical competence in relation to administration and programme development; and to understand and accept one's own attitudes and behaviour as means to creative staff and programme development.

REQUIREMENTS OF A GOOD FIELD COUNSELLOR

Successful field counselling depends on the personality, attitude, knowledge and skill of the counsellor and the psychological atmosphere that he is able to generate to negotiate modifications or change.⁷ A counsellor intervenes in the working of the agency positively and purposefully. The one who probes, passes judgements, questions and advises, is likely to have difficulty in being accepted. Establishing a climate conducive to a positive relationship is therefore a pre-requisite to effective counselling process.

The counsellor should be a mature person, with a broad outlook, wide interest and sensitiveness to the behavioural pattern and needs of the persons and organisations he deals with. These qualities are essential for the development of a positive relationship which is an indispensable tool, in addition to knowledge and counselling skill.

A field counsellor should have faith in voluntary and State action, and their capacity to render social welfare services effectively. Similarly, since more and more social welfare programmes are developed under governmental agencies, the counsellor should be in a position to offer consultancy to them as well.

A field counsellor is a dynamic and

constructive leader, with keen sensitivity to the community's needs, feelings and attitudes of the counsellee/client and the capacity to stimulate the counsellee/counselling agency and the community to work towards goals established through mutual and continued interaction between the two. He should be a catalytic agent of planned change.

Effective field counselling requires that the counsellor has knowledge of relevant social welfare activities, minimum standards for their development, other social services at national, State and local levels, and field counselling techniques and concepts related to administration, roles, and systems. These requirements are not generally available in one person, but he should be aware of their need and strive to incorporate them.

The field counsellor should continually base his counselling process on first hand knowledge of problems and situations, through systematically planned field visits and discussions with service personnel at all levels. This is essential to avoid the danger of making the counselling process dependent just on academic knowledge of theories and concepts.

ADVANTAGES

A comprehensive field counselling service can provide an unifying base to social welfare services in India through a common approach and philosophy and the requisite skills. The number and levels of personnel involved in implementing social welfare services and the pattern of their initial selection and training have been uneven. The possibilities of all having professional training in social work through a core curriculum in social work education is neither practical nor financially viable. However, their performance can be more effectively upgraded and sharpened through a continuing programme of field counselling based on long-term, positive relationship with field counsellor.

Considering that the majority of service and administrative personnel have been in the field for many years, their functioning is likely to be highly crystallised in approach, attitudes and behavioural pattern. A field counsellor competent in counselling skills combined with years of experience in field practice and expertise would be an excellent catalytic agent of change.

DIFFICULTIES

The profession of social work in India is young compared to the services, so are professional social workers as compared to the voluntary and paid workers implementing them. In a country where age and seniority count, the young field counsellor emerging from a profession not yet established will have to prove his effectiveness to be accepted by the counsellee, often senior in age and experience.

The existing cadre of inspectorate staff in social welfare services has job oriented short-term inservice training. However, they lack supervised experience in skill or knowledge input. Whatever supervision they may have had is administrative and related to their accountability for achievement of required quantitative targets. Hence their growth on the job is rarely related to their potentials. Again, the bureaucratic system within which they operate tends to be restrictive, giving limited scope to exploring, experimenting and innovating. Hence, the majority perform their functions in a routine manner. Considering that all are not temperamentally suited to make the best possible use of inservice training, a carefully planned admission process will have to be evolved to select those who can benefit most from the training programme in field counselling.

Development of an effective field counselling programme presupposes a continuing relation and creative dialogue between the schools of social work and

administrators. It would require a conscious effort by both based on understanding of each other as partners in the task of developing the field services.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

Field counselling service in India is still primarily at the conceptual level and is likely to face the problem of identity in relation to professional social work, counselling and administration. Further, its role model as well as commonly accepted professional image remains to be evolved. Hence, there is the problem of operational differentiation in terms of its status, role and areas of performance. Field counsellors are often expected to have multiple responsibilities, leading to role confusion both on the part of the counsellor and the counsellee.

Though the field counsellor is considered to have the twin role of change agent and process expert, his temperament and exposure will greatly determine the role he can play most effectively. Another problem is related to his entry and position vis-a-vis the counsellee system. It will be essential to have a clear understanding of how this will be reflected when the field counsellor is a part of the counsellee system or when he enters from outside. This aspect needs to be carefully observed under both situations to minimise the disequilibrium his entry is bound to create and gain a clear perspective of the manner in which it can be best handled. A careful consideration is required of the extent to which the counsellor's relationship with the counsellee should be influenced by his authority and administrative and supervisory accountability, and how and where a line may be drawn between the two for the effective functioning of the counsellor.

The following questions may be raised to highlight some of the relevant issues and concerns regarding educational preparation

and inservice training for the field counsellor: (i) Are there special aptitudes, abilities and personality characteristics required of a field counsellor? If so, what? (ii) Which interaction model is most useful in counselling—clinical, educational or community organisation? (iii) Should all field counsellors be clinically trained and experienced? If so, when and how should such counsellors be given the required knowledge and skills related to administrative action, social planning and social policy, etc.? Is clinical training essential in the context of the Indian situation of mass problem? If clinical exposure is considered necessary, how best can it be developed to give a deeper understanding of self and others? (iv) What should be the most appropriate organisation to impart such exposure and at what stage? (v) Would it not be more realistic at the present stage of development of the social work profession to synchronise graduate and under-graduate professional training in social work with an advanced one year course in field counselling rather than merely concentrate on an advanced course in field counselling? (vi) What should be the proportionate weightage between academic instruction, supervised field work and research participation in a programme of field counselling? (vii) To what extent a combination of 'generic', 'specialization' or either, be realistic in a programme of training for field counsellors in the Indian context?

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The basic knowledge and skills of professional social work transferable and relevant for field counsellors are knowledge of human growth and development, the effects of stress on social functioning, inter-relationships between an individual's problems emerging from non-satisfaction of basic human needs, knowledge regarding social resources, social planning, skills in the individual, group and community processes, planning and evalua-

tion, and skill in purposeful use of self in problem solving tasks. These skills and knowledge are relevant to all social work activities. In addition, the field counsellor should have knowledge of structure of counsellee system, of social system theories, of social roles in relation to various professional sub-cultures. Knowledge and skills regarding supervision, inservice training and administration are equally important. This training may be imparted through a combination of inservice training workshops, seminars, etc., in collaboration with schools of social work as well as through deputation of selected personnel to regular post-graduate training in professional social work.

Some field counselling may be built into post-graduate training in professional social work. However, the objective should be, mainly, to give an exposure by way of offering it as an introduction course and not to develop competence in field counselling.

The course content in field counselling should have academic, supervised field practice and research components. A faculty group in each school of social work should carefully explore and assess its capacity to develop a course in field counselling on the basis of the faculty's competence to offer the above three components effectively

MANU M DESAI

NOTES

- 1 *Report of the Study Team on Social Welfare and Welfare of Backward Classes*, Planning Commission, Government of India, New Delhi, 1959, pp 28-29
- 2 *Grant-in-Aid Code Committee Report*, Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi, 1961, pp 73-75
- 3 *Report of the Child Care Committee*, Central Social Welfare Board, 1963, p 241

- 4 *Report of the Committee for Review and Evaluation of Programmes*, Central Social Welfare Board, 1964, p 24
- 5 *A Study of the Programmes, 1953-69*, Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi, 1969, p 5
- 6 *Field Counselling Service—A Pilot Project*, Central Social Welfare Board, New Delhi, 1974, pp 103-104
- 7 *Ibid*, pp 12-13

FINANCING SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

From times immemorial, human societies have been supporting social welfare services. During the early days, the people and the State raised or gave funds for community kitchens, planting trees for shade, building drinking water stalls, construction of roads and undertaking relief measures for the poor. In modern times, the financing of social welfare has to be viewed in the context of the scope of social welfare.

Social welfare services have been conceived in the five year plans to mean services for such weaker and vulnerable sections of the community who cannot take advantage of existing social and other services because of certain handicaps—physical, mental and social—or whose needs require the organisation of special services for their development and well-being. Thus social welfare services include welfare of children, women, the handicapped, and the aged and infirm from the vulnerable sections of society. Social welfare services are additive and supplementary to other social services for the development of human resources such as health, education, nutrition, housing, etc. Although the term social welfare can be viewed in the wider context of maximising the welfare of all persons in society, handicapped and others, for the purposes of this article, social

welfare has been primarily used in the limited sense in which it is used in the Plans due to non-availability of data on social welfare components in other sectors of the Plan.

SOURCES OF FINANCING

Social welfare services may be financed from the following sources:

- (i) Charity by individuals giving assistance in kind or cash to orphans, widows, the poor, the handicapped, etc., by an individual out of his income or by providing free labour required for social welfare programmes.
- (ii) Funds raised by organised groups, voluntary agencies, cooperatives, religious, private and public charitable trusts, donations, etc.
- (iii) Subscriptions, interest, fees, grants-in-aid, etc.
- (iv) Government revenues
 - (a) Central Government,
 - (b) State Government,
 - (c) Local bodies such as corporations, municipalities and Panchayats
- (v) Incentive of tax concession for funds used for social welfare and rural development.
- (vi) Funds established by the Government such as the National Children's Fund.
- (vii) Assistance from United Nations and other international agencies, foreign aid, etc.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Due to the higher priority accorded to other sectors in the development plans, the public sector allocations for social welfare have been less than 0.5 per cent. It is in this context of very limited governmental commitment of funds, that the community has to raise resources necessary for organising social welfare services. The content of services, the inputs of finances and the methods used may vary from time to time, from community to community, and from service to service. The

need for larger finance for social welfare has also arisen because of the use of techniques of social work to help individuals, groups or the community to diagnose their own problems and to help them to try to solve the problems themselves.

Communities raise funds when there is a felt need or a common danger or a threat, may be from flood, epidemic, war, fire, etc. Cash, voluntary labour and materials are contributed for such causes even by the poorest communities. One of the pre-requisites for raising funds by a community is that its purpose is based on the felt needs. Another principal pre-requisite is that depending on the project for which funds are sought to be raised, project planning is done by the community itself or in close cooperation and consultation with the majority of the members of the community or those members who matter in the community. Third pre-requisite is that programmes are implemented by the community itself.

Social welfare services have also been supported through small efforts of individuals who donate regularly for the maintenance, training, education and rehabilitation of orphans, widows and infirm persons.

There are different considerations for contributing to social causes including social welfare. Some of these are;

(i) Religious considerations: Among the Hindus, for instance, one gives charity with a view to (a) attaining *Moksha*; (b) pleasing certain deities so as to wash away one's sins, to seek favours or to avoid inviting wrath. Among the Muslims, there is a system of *Zakat*, *Sadakka* and *Khairat*. Similarly, the Christians are ordained by their religion to donate for charity.

(ii) Social considerations: Some people give to keep up the ideal of responsible citizenship. Sometimes, commitment to a cause is due to personal experience with a handicapped person in the family or learning or experiencing a social problem. Some contributions are made for a social cause to avoid its misuse by unscrupulous heirs or relations.

(iii) Personal considerations: Some of the personal considerations for making contributions are: existence of traditions of charity in one's family or caste; pleasing friends, relatives, colleagues, etc.; getting an opportunity of meeting 'very important persons' and becoming 'popular', saving on income tax, etc.

Some of the reasons for poor fund-raising for social welfare activities are: (i) improper programme planning and/or accounting; (ii) out-moded methods of work of an organisation; (iii) poor morale of the staff and lack of adequate education, (iv) poor or limited contacts with potential donors; (v) lack of imagination in identifying new sources and methods for fund-raising, and (vi) over-emphasis on cash resources and not realising the value of donations in kind or voluntary services.

METHODS OF FUND RAISING

Outmoded social welfare programmes and methods of financing result in poor availability of resources for social welfare activities. There is a need for devising new methods of raising resources for voluntary social welfare. Some of these are indicated below:

(i) Campaigns: Though some voluntary organisations launch annual campaigns for raising funds, there is no system under which the whole community is involved. In the United States, Canada and other western countries, community chests are organised every year under which a registered organisation is engaged mainly in collecting funds from the community for social welfare programmes organised by different agencies in the community. Every social welfare agency does not have to raise its own resources; rather, it must concentrate on organising welfare services. It is required to submit a statement of its programmes and moneys required for the next year. The funds are raised by people specially qualified for this purpose. This helps in economising on administrative expenditure and organisational efforts for fund-raising. The community chest has also the advantage of

emotional involvement of the entire community in maintaining welfare services in a community. Regular flow of funds to social welfare organisations through the community chest helps in continuity of programmes and job security to the staff, besides avoiding duplication.

(ii) Lotteries and Raffles Some organisations have a system of running lotteries or organising raffles for raising funds. Several State Governments are now running lotteries to raise resources for various purposes including welfare services.

(iii) Income Generating Activities through Industries One of the methods of financing social welfare programmes and creating a sense of self-reliance among the beneficiaries is organising training-cum-production centres. This has been successfully tried under the title 'Goodwill Industries' in North America under which the organisation collects unserviceable household articles and gadgets which after being sorted out are renovated and polished by handicapped persons and then are sold to those who cannot afford to buy new ones. Similarly, several voluntary organisations in India have organised socio-economic projects of income generation for the beneficiaries of the welfare programmes.

(iv) Other methods The other methods which are comparatively new for raising funds for social welfare include (a) contribution of bank interest (paisa component only) at the end of each month by agreeable account holders at the request of an organisation; (b) utilising funds of *Wakfs*, temples, trusts, etc, (c) sponsorship of children under which individuals or organisations pay regularly the cost of maintenance of children, (d) organising fetes, carnivals, tambolas, etc, and (e) organising matches, cultural evenings, community kitchens, etc.

The desire to help the less fortunate members or those in need is found in all societies. All religions enjoin charity and welfare and place a high premium on the act of helping and doing good to others. The

commonly held belief that God always keeps the doors of heaven open to those who are endowed with the quality of charity and helping others has given rise to philanthropy. Religious institutions are often engaged in welfare work. Their activities are facilitated through endowments and offerings, donations, etc., received from time to time.

TEMPLES AND TRUSTS

Large funds often running into several crores of rupees are collected annually by temples and religious trusts. For a long time, there was little control of the community on the utilisation of the income of these temples, nor did the community often think of utilising these funds for charitable purposes. There is now a growing trend towards community control on the income of temples and its utilisation for social welfare purposes. In some States, the income of temples and their administration has been brought under the provisions of legislation and funds are utilised for educational purposes, welfare services, etc. Very often, however, the traditional concept of custodial care governs the welfare services financed from such funds. Some of the temple trusts like the Tirumala Tirupati Devasathanams Trusts have huge earnings, a part of which is used for technical and general education programmes, including those at college and university level, and for welfare institutions, etc.

Others like the Jagannath Temple at Puri, too have sizable earnings. Unfortunately, during the last three decades, it has not been possible to assess the total income and assets of all these temples and trusts throughout the country. Since social welfare should primarily be the concern of a community, it will be in the interest of the poor and the downtrodden if plans and programmes were prepared to assess and utilise temple funds for social welfare programmes.

PUBLIC TRUSTS IN MAHARASHTRA

Under the Public Trusts Act, 1950, the

Government of Maharashtra has appointed a Charity Commissioner with a view to ensuring better utilisation of funds. The trusts constituted for social, charitable and religious purposes have been brought under the purview of the Charity Commissioner. All such associations/institutions are required to submit to the Charity Commissioner their annual reports and statement of accounts. According to the Directories (volumes I and II) published by the Charity Commissioner there were 71,773 trusts registered with the Charity Commissioner on 31 March 1976.¹ This included 15,264 societies registered under the Societies Registration Act. According to the information collected from the office of the Charity Commissioner, Bombay, up to 31 March 1981 there were more than 86,000 trusts registered in Maharashtra. The Directory of the greater Bombay and suburban districts, published in 1979 (volume I) and in 1980 (volume II) indicate that there were 11,650 trusts in greater Bombay and suburban districts as on 31 December 1980 and their total income from immovable and movable properties was to the tune of Rs 54.64 crores.

CHARITY AMONG THE MUSLIMS

Giving charity and helping the poor, the disabled, victims of circumstances, etc. is one of the basic tenets of Islam. *Zakat*, *Sadakka* and *Khairat* are important forms of voluntary charity given by individuals as an embodiment of their gratitude to God. *Zakat* funds are to be used for imparting learning, promotion of education, organising free kitchens, building roadside drinking water stalls, shelters, mosques, *madarasa* (religious education centres), orphanages, hospitals, and bridges.

The practice of creating *wakf* (trust) started very early among the Muslims. The Central Wakf Council was established in December 1964. It consists of 20 members nominated by the Union Minister in charge of *Wakfs* who is also the ex-officio chairman of the Council. The Central Wakf Council derives its income from contributions from State Wakf Boards to

the extent of 1 per cent of these incomes and government grants for the development of urban *wakf* properties. According to Annual Report of the Central Wakf Council for the year 1978-79, the income of the Council from contributions from State Wakf Boards was Rs 1.66 lakhs and from government grants Rs 30.06 lakhs. Income from other sources such as payment of loan, interest from bank deposits, etc. was Rs 1.53 lakhs. The total income was Rs 33.25 lakhs while the total expenditure was Rs 21.19 lakhs which included Rs 88,000 on scholarships to students and Rs. 19 lakhs as loans to State Wakf Boards for development of *wakf* properties. Government grants for the development of *wakf* properties were distributed to 6 old and 6 new projects. The Central Government also gave Rs 80 lakhs as grants-in-aid during 1974-75 to 1978-79 for a revolving development fund in the Council for financing project of development of urban *wakf* properties. The entire amount was advanced to 21 projects in 9 States.²

OTHER COMMUNITIES

Other religious communities in India such as Christians, Parsis, Buddhists and Sikhs are well-known for their concern for the community and contributions for social welfare programmes. A number of Christian churches have organised social welfare services which serve the Christians as well as members from other communities. A large number of schools, colleges, hospitals, institutions for the aged and infirm, creches, orphanages, leprosy centres, etc. are run by Christian Missions with funds largely collected from the Christian community in India and abroad. One of the important contributions made by the Young Men's Christian Association in India was the Marthandam Rural Development Project in South India. The Delhi School of Social Work which is now a Department of Social Work in the Delhi University owes its existence to the funds donated by the Young Women's Christian Association in India.

The Parsi Panchayat, Bombay, is a fine

example of community participation for the welfare and development of the Parsi community. According to the statement of accounts of the Parsi Panchayat, Bombay, for the period ending 31 December 1980, the total income of the Panchayat was Rs 68.94 lakhs. The value of the total assets of the Panchayat (on 31 December 1980) was about Rs 7.83 crores. The expenditure incurred on various programmes was Rs 51.21 lakhs. The programmes and activities of the Panchayat include relief of poverty, running educational and technical institutions and colleges and hostels for boys and girls, organising health services, undertaking housing projects and supporting cultural and literary activities in the colonies.

Among the Sikhs there is a strong motivation for raising funds for financing activities like *langars* (free common kitchens), educational institutions and social welfare measures. The Khalsa Dewan and the Shromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, bodies constituted to administer Sikh shrines of historical importance, have large funds which are being utilised for financing social welfare programmes. Similarly, the Jams raise funds for financing social welfare activities not only for the Jams but also for the members of other communities.

RESOURCES OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

Charity has always been given a high place in the cultural heritage and social system in India. With the development of social services, new approaches have developed for the solution of social problems from charity to organised programmes of self-help and rehabilitation of persons in need. The collection of funds for social welfare activities by voluntary agencies has undergone a change. Donations from Zamindars (landlords) are not available after the abolition of the Zamindari system, industrialists are less prone to contribute large funds because of heavy taxation, religion, too, is no longer a strong force to give charity. The

higher cost of living makes it difficult for agencies to run even the existing services with normal resources. Further, with the development of social work methods, the cost of services in terms of trained staff, equipment, accommodation, etc. has increased. Funds raised in the community are now being shared by a larger number of agencies.

A study of the income patterns of about 6,000 voluntary organisations undertaken in 1965-66 reveals that during the period 1953 to 1961, the average total income of the agencies went up to Rs 14,752 in 1961-62 as against Rs 13,402 in the year 1953-54. The percentage of income by way of State Government grants has been showing a decline and the grant of the Central Government has been showing an upward trend. The Central Social Welfare Board's grants met 2.40 per cent of the resources of the agencies in 1953-54 but this percentage went up to 17.40 in 1961-62. On an average, resources of the agencies from the Central Social Welfare grant has been 8.54 per cent. There seems to be some truth in the observation made generally about drying up of traditional resources of voluntary agencies. As against 69 per cent of resources being raised by donation in 1953-54 this figure came down to 55 per cent in 1961-63.³

A study conducted by the Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission (1978) on the working of aided voluntary agencies in social welfare indicates that 24 per cent of the grants were from the State Government, 17.4 per cent from the Central Social Welfare Board, 2.5 per cent from Central Government and 1.3 per cent from local bodies.⁴ A study conducted by the author in 1966-67 also reveals similar trends.

The general belief that bulk of the income of voluntary agencies is by way of grant is not well founded in as much as the grants from different sources constituted only 36 per cent in the sixties and 46 per cent in the seventies. In other words, much of the resources (64 per cent in the sixties and 54 per cent in the seventies) came from either the donors, the

members, or the beneficiaries. Therefore, though there is still a certain amount of voluntary action in raising of resources by social welfare institutions from the general public, yet this effort is showing a decline

As against the average total income of Rs 13,402 in 1953-54 of 30,000 voluntary agencies aided by the Central Social Welfare Board, the average income of almost double the number of agencies during 1960-61 rose to Rs 18,370. This came down to Rs. 14,752 during 1969-70. In other words, as against the total income of Rs. 4 crores of about 3,000 agencies during 1953-54, this amount went up to Rs 11 crores for 6,000 agencies in 1960-61. Thus, there was an overall increase of resources of Rs 7 crores during a period of eight years, with the doubling of the number of agencies. The income has increased in a higher proportion than the proportion of increase in the number of voluntary agencies. Though the income per agency has shown an increase in absolute terms, because of greater responsibilities undertaken by voluntary agencies and the higher cost of services, this amount is still inadequate as compared to the amount they were raising and spending earlier on their welfare activities. Further, a decline of average income in 1969-70 is a cause for anxiety. With the development of social legislation, the government has taken an increasing responsibility for statutory services.⁵

A study of the expenditure patterns of voluntary agencies during 1953-61 shows that about three-fourths of their resources were spent on recurring items. Again, the percentage of recurring expenditure over the total income has shown an increase from 72 per cent in 1953-54 to 81 per cent in 1958-59.⁶ According to the study of the Programme Evaluation Organisation, however, recurring expenditure constituted 83.4 per cent and the non-recurring expenditure 16.6 per cent. The study also shows that 50 per cent of resources of organisations are spent on administration establishment and only 24.5 per cent on programme activities.⁷

The total income of all-India agencies in 1964 had been worked out to approximately over Rs 730 crores. There was an average deficit of Rs. 41,187 per organisation. Further, 66.66 per cent organisations partly met their expenditure through government grants, out of which 31.81 per cent got grants from the Central Social Welfare Board. About 75 per cent of all-India organisations raised their income through donations and subscriptions.

CONTROL ON FUND RAISING

While many sincere workers are busy raising resources for financing social welfare programmes through voluntary effort, there are some who try to take advantage of the charitable impulses of people for their personal ends. At times, the absence of proper and effective accounting practices may render difficult feedback about proper utilisation of funds. Collection of funds for social welfare purposes can be divided into the following three categories: (i) well-intentioned and well administered; (ii) well-intentioned but poorly administered, (iii) outright fraud or commercial enterprise in the name of welfare.

While there is a need for encouraging communities to raise funds for organising welfare programmes, it is also necessary to regulate and supervise fund raising through a system of granting permission or a licence. An agency applying for permission for fund raising should fulfil the following criteria. (i) It should have a definite programme of welfare services for the community; (ii) it should have an active and reputed governing board/managing committee; (iii) it should have a realistic budget and a realistic system of accounting and audit by a qualified auditor, (iv) it should have the support of the community, (v) it should have been working atleast for three years; (vi) it should have been already raising a certain amount for its early operations; (vii) it should be registered and non-profit making.

Every agency requiring permission/licence for fund raising should file with the local authority on the prescribed form an

application giving the following information (a) name under which the organisation intends to operate; (b) general purpose for which the organisation is constituted and the purpose for which the public contributions are to be solicited, (c) the period of time during which and the areas where funds will be solicited, (d) the budget estimate for the following year and copies of the statement of accounts of the last three years along with a copy of registration certificate, and (e) other relevant information as may be necessary in this regard indicating the amount spent on campaigning in the previous year

After an agency is registered with the appropriate local authority it should submit every year certified copies of its statement of accounts indicating the amount raised through local contributions and how it has been utilised, supported by a copy of the annual report.

FINANCING THROUGH GRANTS-IN-AID

In the First Five Year Plan efforts were made to find a framework for organising social welfare services based on the experience of the working of voluntary organisations. It was decided that (i) the responsibility for developing social welfare services would by and large be that of voluntary agencies, (ii) the state would give financial assistance to the voluntary agencies in order to enable them to expand and improve their programmes, (iii) an autonomous organisation known as the Central Social Welfare Board would be entrusted with the work of assisting social welfare programmes through voluntary organisations.

A massive national grants-in-aid programme for social welfare came into existence in 1953. The Board has been giving assistance to around 6,000 voluntary organisations engaged in the different fields of social welfare. By the end of 31 March 1981, the Board has financed social welfare programmes either by the voluntary agencies or directly by the Board itself to the

tune of about Rs 76 crores in a period of almost 27 years of its existence

The Central Social Welfare Board's grants-in-aid system is based on the following conditions and principles (i) a voluntary organisation seeking assistance must be registered as a society, cooperative society, charitable trust, etc, (ii) the organisation must have its own regularly constituted managing committee with broad-based representation, (iii) the programme of the agency should be within the purview of the Board, (iv) the agency should by and large raise at least 50 per cent of the funds required for the welfare programmes, and (v) the programmes and accounts of the institutions financed by the Board should be open to inspection by a nominee of the Board

Before financial assistance is sanctioned to an institution/agency it is inspected by a nominee of the Board who scrutinises the programme proposals prepared by the agency with reference to the background of the agency and makes suitable recommendations in regard to the amount of grant which should be sanctioned. Grant funds are earmarked for specific programmes/items of expenditure.

Although the Board started with the funding of about 3,000 voluntary organisations in 1953-54, about 8,000 voluntary organisations received assistance by 1961-62. Of about 10,000 voluntary agencies estimated to be functioning in the field of social welfare, the number of institutions funded by the Board was only 5,380 in 1981. In other words, the number of agencies in the field of social welfare funded by the Board has come down instead of increasing.

Funds made available to the Board for voluntary social welfare programmes under different categories have been increasing progressively from about Rs 13.8 lakhs in 1953-54 (plan + non-plan) to around Rs 10.04 crores in 1980-81. This means that during the period 1953-54 to 1980-81 the funds available with the Board for the voluntary sector have increased 125 times.

GRANTS BY STATE GOVERNMENTS

Social welfare programmes are also financed by the grants-in-aid system of the State Governments, mostly under various statutes such as Children Act, etc. Some of the State Governments have evolved their own rules for grants-in-aid which, in many cases, are flexible but in some cases interfere with the working of voluntary agencies. In many instances, both the Central Social Welfare Board and the State Governments are financing programmes of the same voluntary organisations and for social welfare work in the same field. There is, therefore, a need for reviewing the working of the grants-in-aid system in order to avoid overlapping between the work of the Board and the State Governments. The study conducted by the Programme Evaluation Organisation recommended that whereas the Central Social Welfare Board should give grants for non-statutory programmes, the State Governments would, in fulfilment of their statutory obligations in the field of social welfare, assist in developing statutory services only.

IMPACT OF GRANTS-IN-AID

Though the Board was created to develop social welfare programmes and to promote voluntary effort with a certain amount of flexibility, this has not been fully achieved in as much as it has been felt by some that the procedures of grants-in-aid by the Board are more cumbersome than even those of the Government.⁹ In fact, some of the voluntary organisations feel that it is easier to get assistance from the Government than from the Board.

The Committee on grants-in-aid of the C S W B (1960) provided certain guidelines for evolving a grant-in-aid code. The Committee also gave suggestions for developing field counselling services and worked out minimum standards of social welfare services. The Board has not yet developed field counselling service which has stood in the way of implementing minimum

standards. Unless the grants-in-aid system is dovetailed with minimum standards and field counselling, the funds given by the Board cannot be effectively utilised for developing social welfare programmes.

One of the problems created by over-emphasis on developing social welfare services through voluntary organisations is that it results in an uneven development of social welfare services as grants-in-aid is dependent upon availability of voluntary organisations in certain areas or for some sections of the population. Communities without voluntary agencies will be deprived of these services. As a matter of fact, the system of grants-in-aid should not be an end in itself. It should rather be one of the means of developing social services, but not the only means.

Funding of welfare programmes alone does not go a long way in promoting social welfare programmes in the voluntary sector. It is sometimes said that because of the grants-in-aid system, voluntary organisations have, by and large, become dependent on government assistance. One of the innovations which the Board should have tried and for which it made some attempts is how best it can make voluntary organisations in the field of social welfare financially self-reliant. The initial idea was that the grants-in-aid system would become a catalyst in generating local resources. In the initial stages, the Board even came out with the idea of trying community chests as is done in some of the western countries. Except in one or two experiments, the idea of community chest did not succeed.

SOCIAL WELFARE IN THE PLANS

The government has now stepped in to promote, develop, organise and implement welfare services apart from giving grants to voluntary organisations. The scale of operation has increased with the establishment of full fledged ministries/departments at the Centre and the States and the growing recognition of the need to finance and implement welfare services. The expenditure on social welfare in

the First Five Year Plan (1951-56) was only Rs 1 96 crores (plan outlay was Rs 4 crores) out of the total expenditure of Rs 1,960 crores in various sectors of the plan. The allocation for social welfare in the Sixth Plan (1980-85) is Rs 271.97 crores, as against a total plan outlay of Rs 97,500 crores.¹⁰ This means that the increase in outlay on social welfare from the First Plan to the Sixth Plan is about 68 times. This may appear quite substantial but an analysis of the proportion of outlay on social welfare to the total plan outlay would indicate that it has remained about 0.2 per cent in different plans. It is true that many programmes in other sectors like backward classes, rural reconstruction, education, health, nutrition and the programmes for employment and income generation of the poor should also be considered as falling within the orbit of welfare. Nonetheless, allocating such small proportion of the national resources for the welfare sector in a country with a large incidence of poverty and large incidence of physical and social handicaps requires some rethinking about the financing of social welfare. This is more necessary when a large number of social legislations are being implemented and resources in the voluntary sector and private charity are drying up.

SCHEDULED CASTES AND TRIBES

In order to provide constitutional safeguards to protect and promote the interests of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, substantial funds have been allocated in the five year plans for this purpose. The total plan outlay on the programmes of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward classes in the Central and State sectors has been increasing during the successive plan period from Rs 30.04 crores in 1951-56 to 930.30 crores in 1980-85.¹¹ These programmes in the backward classes sector are conceived as supplemental to the total development efforts to be made by the general sector of development for promoting the social and economic well-being of these people. Under

the successive plans, Rs 322.25 crores were spent in this sector.¹²

The major schemes for scheduled castes in the Central sector consisted of post-matric scholarships, girls' hostels, coaching and allied schemes, and aid to voluntary organisations. In the State plans, educational programmes included pre-matric scholarships and stipends, exemptions from payment of tuition and examination fees, supply of books and stationery, mid-day meals, uniforms, etc. Schemes for economic development have been largely in the nature of aids to individuals for the purchase of agricultural implements, bullocks, fertilisers, land reclamation and for taking up village industries and handicrafts. In addition to utilising the normal budget of the States and the Central Government for various schemes of social and economic development, a special central additive for the scheduled castes' component plan of the order of Rs 600 crores have been provided in the Sixth Plan.¹³ This amount would be utilised for economic and educational development, social services, etc.

Special programmes for tribal area development have also been envisaged under successive plan periods. The tribal sub-plan represents the total development effort from various sources: (i) outlay from the State plan, (ii) investment by Central ministries, (iii) special Central assistance of the Ministry of Home Affairs, (iv) institutional finance. The tribal sub-plan has been in operation for varying periods since the Fifth Plan. It has been estimated that the total financial investment in the tribal sub-plan area during 1975-78 has been over a thousand crore of rupees.¹⁴ Special assistance to the tune of Rs 470 crores has been provided in the Sixth Plan for the tribal sub-plan. A provision of Rs 200 crores has also been made for the North Eastern Council for the Sixth Plan period.¹⁵

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S FUND

The Government of India constituted the

National Children's Fund in March 1979, to give grants to voluntary organisations for implementing programmes for children. The Fund started with a contribution of Rs. One lakh made by the Government of India. A donation of Rs. 5 lakhs was received from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. Contributions are expected from the general public, voluntary organisations, State Governments, industry, business houses, etc. for which an appeal has been issued by the Prime Minister. There has been considerable response to this appeal from individuals. About Rs. 26 lakhs have been collected from sale of IYC seals and Rs. 46 lakhs by way of donations to the Fund. The total amount in the Children's Fund stood at about Rs. 75 lakhs at the end of March 1981.

PARTICIPATION OF INDUSTRIES

Industrial houses have, in the past, given donations for all welfare purposes and even set up trusts for the purpose. There is a provision under section 80 G of the Income Tax Act under which funds given by an assessee for charitable or social purposes upto a maximum of Rs. 50,000 per year are exempt from income tax (to the extent of 50 per cent only). Under this provision, a donee agency has to get clearance from the concerned Commissioner of Income Tax on the basis of its aims and objects, financial position, performance, etc. so that when it receives funds from the donor, it produces a copy of the exemption certificate from the income tax authority.

Under the provisions of Section 35 CC of the Income Tax Act, profits of a company if applied to approved programmes of rural development in an area notified as a 'rural area' under the Income Tax Act are fully exempt from income tax. This provision was introduced with a view to encouraging industrial and mercantile houses and cooperatives to plough their profits into the development of rural areas. Section 35 CCA was added to the Income Tax Act under which funds given by the assessee to an approved

association or institution undertaking rural development programmes would also be fully exempted from income tax. The powers of the prescribed Central authority are now being transferred to the State authority.

FUNDING BY STATE GOVERNMENTS

Most of the State Governments started taking interest in financing social welfare programmes after the Central Government took the initiative in allocating funds for social welfare in the five year plans. The Centrally sponsored schemes helped in making budget allocations in the State plans for social welfare. Among the States Punjab spent the highest amount of Rs. 212 lakhs on social welfare programmes in the Fifth Plan, followed by Tamil Nadu, which spent Rs. 194 lakhs. Among the Union Territories Delhi spent the highest amount of Rs. 111 lakhs on social welfare programmes during the Fifth Plan period. The total expenditure in the State sector in the Fifth Plan on social welfare was Rs. 15.32 crores. There has been a progressive increase in Plan allocations in the State sector which may be largely due to acceptance of responsibility by the governments of statutory programmes for social welfare.

In addition to plan funds being provided in the State sector, State Governments have also been running and assisting programmes of social welfare out of non-plan funds. As a matter of fact, the size of non-plan funding in several States is larger than the plan fund. Therefore, the stability of social welfare programmes and their size could be determined by considering financial allocations in the non-plan sector of the State budget.

The State departments of social welfare also give grants-in-aid to voluntary agencies primarily for running programmes and services.

MUNICIPALITIES

Some of the Municipal Committees and Municipal Corporations in the country have

also taken up social welfare programmes, though on a small scale. In fact, many social services should be local responsibility. The Delhi Municipal Corporation was the first to start urban community development projects. This work is now being continued under the reorganised Department of Community Services. Similarly, urban community projects are being organised in other metropolitan cities. Municipal Corporations have set up community halls/centres, reading rooms, libraries, craft classes for women, adult and social education centres, night shelters, Balwadis, creches, etc.

PANCHAYATS

The Gram Panchayats (village councils), Block Panchayat Samitis (block councils) and Zila Parishads (district councils) have also some responsibilities for social welfare under statutes governing Panchayati Raj institutions. Though in some States there is provision for levy of a local tax or cess, by and large government funds are received for social welfare programmes. Panchayati Raj enactments of State Governments provide for establishment in their jurisdiction of (a) information, community library and recreation centres, and (b) youth organisations, Mahila Mandals, farmers' clubs, etc. The Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1961, and the Karnataka Village Panchayats and Local Boards Act, 1959, provide for constitution of social justice committees for securing social justice to the weaker sections of society. It is hoped that with the implementation of the Report of the Committee on Panchayati Raj Institutions (1978), more financial and administrative power will devolve on these bodies in order to enable them to take up more programmes of social welfare at the local level.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

In order to assist developing countries and speed up their social and economic progress, the United Nations and its specialised agencies have worked out programmes of technical

cooperation. These organisations give financial and technical assistance to the member countries through grants for projects, appointment of experts, grants for seminars and conferences, training, etc. The United Nations agencies provide assistance in the area of child care, social development, population problems, community development, social services, relief and rehabilitation, welfare of the handicapped, rural development and food to provide work to the people.

The United Nations Children's Fund has since 1949 been giving assistance to the Government of India for a variety of social development programmes. The World Food Programme contributes food for supplementary feeding of pre-school children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. Similarly, World Bank has agreed to provide assistance for an integrated nutrition project in Tamil Nadu.

Funds for social welfare have also been forthcoming from the United States of America since 1947, through a variety of agencies such as USAID, CIP, CARE and other organisations working in the field of social development.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A study of financing of social welfare programmes shows that complete information is not available about the size of funds spent on social welfare programmes and services by different organisations—governmental, local authorities, voluntary agencies, etc. It is therefore, suggested that a comprehensive study may be commissioned in this regard.

Hindu and Sikh temples get donations/offering of a magnitude which could be enough to maintain a large number of social welfare institutions. Though some of the States have established Devasthanam Boards or Departments, a lot more remains to be done in order to channelise Devasthanam trust funds for effective and purposeful social welfare programmes.

On account of the interplay of a variety of factors indicated earlier, contribution of resources from the landed class, industrialists, etc is drying up. The government has been budgeting higher allocations for social welfare. By and large, social welfare services should be financed by the community itself. Thus fund raising for social welfare has to be made more broad-based and effective. Since the religious force behind charity is getting weaker, more rational ways of finding resources from the donors will have to be introduced. Newer methods of fund raising will have to be thought of. Apart from raising financial resources from the community, equal importance should be given to mobilising resources in kind and voluntary services. The free time of citizens may be utilised in organising social welfare programmes.

The present grant-in-aid system in social welfare is out-dated. It requires to be simplified and reoriented to the needs of the modern times.

The government should allocate larger funds for social welfare as against 0.2 per cent of the total outlay of the five year plans for social welfare at present. It should be at least five per cent.

An effort should be made to assess and pool all resources and to bring about necessary coordination in their proper utilisation. The allocation of government funds for social welfare in a given geographical area should be on a matching basis.

Voluntary organisations may be assisted to generate their own resources through various income-generating projects, rather than depend merely on grants-in-aid. The mechanism of grants-in-aid should be used only to develop new programmes or to improve and develop existing programmes and not for maintenance of existing services except those of a statutory nature.

The idea of community chest has not been given a fair trial in this country. Attempts have to be made to organise community chest type of campaigns in limited areas, where there are a

large number of social welfare agencies needing funds. In order to create confidence among the public in favour of fund-raising campaigns or community chest, there should be a system of sound financial administration and regulation and control on fund raising.

The beneficiaries of welfare programmes should pay token fees, may be in cash, kind or voluntary labour for the services rendered to them, however small the amount may be. The inmates or beneficiaries of welfare institutions should, after being gainfully employed, be motivated to contribute a part of their income to the welfare institutions which were responsible for their social and economic rehabilitation.

The newly established National Children's Fund should be given wide publicity. Exemption in income tax should be granted to those who make contributions to the National Children's Fund. The existing provisions in income tax under section 80 C and 35 CCA, etc may be brought to the notice of voluntary associations/institutions and the donors.

Newer ways and means of raising funds from the community should be devised. This could be done through training and research by the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development in the methods of fund raising.

D PAUL CHOWDHRY

NOTES

- 1 *Directory of Public Trusts*, Government of Maharashtra, Vol I & II, 1970, 1980
- 2 *Annual Report 1978-79*, Central Wakf Council, New Delhi, pp 1, 3
- 3 D Paul Chowdhry, *Voluntary Social Welfare in India*, Sterling Publication(p) Ltd, 1971, pp 62-75
- 4 Programme Evaluation Organisation, *Study of the Working of Voluntary Agencies in Social Welfare*, Planning Commission, Government of India, 1978
- 5 D Paul Chowdhry, *op cit*
- 6 *Ibid*
- 7 Programme Evaluation Organisation, *op cit*

- 8 *Ibid*
- 9 In regard to the rigidity of procedure and delay in sanctioning grants, it may be mentioned that author had come across in the National Archives of India, files dating back to more than hundred years relating to the work of voluntary agencies. One of the files pertains to grants-in-aid to the Friend-in-Need Society of Madras which sought assistance from the Government of Madras in 1859. The file shows that the organisation got assistance within one month of the submission of its application to the governor.
- 10 *Sixth Five Year Plan, Summary*, Planning Commission, Government of India
- 11 *Ibid*
- 12 *Report of the Working Group on Scheduled Castes and other Backward Classes During medium term plan 1978-83*, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, August 1978, Chapter 2, p 3
- 13 *Sixth Five Year Plan, op cit*
- 14 *Report of the Working Group on Tribal Development During Sixth Plan, (1980-85)*, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, October 1980, Chapter 4, p 30
- 15 *Sixth Five Year Plan, op cit*

FOSTER CARE

In the framework of modern social work practice, the term 'foster care' means essentially a service for the homeless, abandoned, rejected, neglected and destitute children, and is an integral part of child welfare programme. In this sense, foster care is the generic term applied to any kind of full-time substitute care of children outside their own home by persons other than their parents.¹ The definition given by the Child Welfare League of America incorporates the essential points and gives a proper perspective to the subject. According to this definition, foster care is a child welfare service which provides for a child substitute family care for a planned period when his own family cannot care for him for a

temporary or indefinite period and when adoption is neither desirable nor feasible.

The disadvantages and deficiencies of institutional care are generally accepted, thanks to research and development in social sciences. Increasing emphasis has been given to keeping the child in a family-like setting through non-institutional services like adoption, foster care and sponsorship. The need for the mother-figure has also given a momentum to family group homes like S O S Children's Villages round the world.

Adoption is the best solution for the homeless child who is orphaned and abandoned. It gives a name, a legal status and a permanent family to a child, and meets the need of the childless couple for progeny. But few children in destitution are adoptable. The difference between adoption and foster care is, that one is permanent, the other may be temporary, one involves no payment, the other does. Some long-term foster care cases do result in adoption.

Fostering means to bring up, to nurse, to promote, to encourage or cherish. The modern concept of foster care as a child welfare service considers it as a temporary arrangement and a substitute for what should have been and cannot be. It is only when there is no hope of reunion with the natural family, either due to death or desertion, that long-term foster care, at times resulting in virtual adoption, is envisaged. The two kinds of foster homes offered for such children needing short-term or long-term care, are individual foster family homes or group foster homes known at times as group family homes.

HISTORY, ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

The origin and development of the organised type of foster care can be traced to the West. Almost everywhere, prior to the advent of the industrial revolution, orphaned and

abandoned children were absorbed in the small village or caste communities or in extended families. With rapid urbanisation following the industrial revolution and employment of young children in factories under abominable conditions, society expressed its concern through various measures, both social and legislative. The large residential institutions created at that time were conceived as entirely self-supporting and were made independent of the community in which they lived. Despite all their defects, they were the pioneers in tackling the problems of unwanted children.

In the United Kingdom, the three major laws that improved the lot of children are the Poor Law Act of 1930, the Children and Young Persons' Act 1933 and the Children's Act 1948. The Children and Young person's Act passed in 1933, obliged local authorities to board out children committed to their care. A subsequent amendment to the same Act made provision for the courts to take children under the age of 17 from their homes and commit them to the care of an adult considered a 'fit person' to care for them, if found guilty of an offence punishable by imprisonment or shown to be in need of care and protection.

The passing of Children's Act in 1948 created Children's Departments and Committees in local authorities and a separate Children's Department of the Home Office, charged with overall supervision of child care nationally, and with specific responsibility for deprived children. The Act was a remarkably progressive piece of legislation which revolutionised the standards of child care in U.K.

FOSTERING IN U K AND U S A

The shift from institutional to individualised foster care was quite early and has been in existence from the beginning of the century when about 7,350 children were boarded out

by Poor Law authorities in England and Wales.² Till the late thirties, however, it was not developed as a means of caring for children deprived of normal home life. The residential form of care was restricted to orphans, deserted children and others who were unlikely to be reunited with their own families. Despite the legislation, neither the number of children nor the proportion of children placed in foster homes by local authorities in England and Wales was greater in 1939 than it was in 1900. Rapid expansion was evident only by 1949 when the number of children in foster care went upto 19,271 (about 35 per cent) and in 1963 to 31,208—more than 50 per cent of all the children for whom they were responsible.³

This increase in foster care placements signifies not only recognition of the disadvantages of institutional care but also of the fact that boarding out was found to be the least expensive method of child care both in money and manpower. Gradually, it became a statutory requirement of the Children's Act for local authorities to board out wherever possible. Today, the foster home is considered an integral and important feature of child care policy in U K.

The origin of foster care in U.S.A as organised social work practice may be traced as far back as 1909 when a White House Conference proposed that every child be helped to promote his social being, which is defined as his ability to function adequately in his social relationships in his family, community, at school and at work.⁴ Since 1935, social services for children have expanded under the child welfare services provision of the Social Security Act. The Aid to Dependent Children programme gives to children who are deprived of the care of one or both parents a better start within their own family. But, despite all supporting services, many cases need foster families due to their own behaviour problems or the severe

personality problems of their parents. In 1967, of the 6,07,900 children under 21, receiving care through State and local departments of public welfare, 33 per cent were in foster family homes⁵

A plausible explanation for this phenomenon given by John Bowlby is that in a society where death rates are low, the rate of employment high, and social welfare schemes adequate, it is the emotional instability and inability of parents to make effective relationship which are the outstanding cause of children becoming deprived of a normal home life

Unsuccessful placements and their aftermath brought the realisation to social work administrators that there was need for caution in increasing foster placements. As Mildred Arnold has put it, "it took a long effort on the part of children themselves, often through bizarre behaviour, to make us realise what separation from their parents was doing to them to show us the limitations in foster care"⁶

The most fundamental redirection in child welfare in recent years is the renewed emphasis on preserving the child's own home. It is challenging many child welfare agencies' traditional emphasis on foster care. It will bring new efforts to coordinate services and place greater emphasis on community planning.

The disadvantages of the foster care system have been brought to light from time to time with greater evidence of the damage done to growing personalities by shuttling children from foster home to foster home, specially problems of adjustment between foster parents and children, hasty or careless placements and lack of after-care service indicating a breakdown of the machinery so essential for successful foster care. The consensus now is towards promoting programmes and services that keep the child in his own home by

strengthening and stabilising families through crisis

KINDS OF FOSTER CARE

Between the two poles of individual or foster family care and group homes, child welfare agencies round the world have evolved a number of intermediate settings arising from the dire needs of children that demand new ways to help children in need of care. These foster homes are developed, depending on the length of time the child needs care and on the arrangement made to finance the cost of care. e.g. Receiving Homes, caring for a group of children on a purely temporary basis, Pre-adoptive Homes, where children are living pending legal consummation of the adoptive plan, Work and Wage Homes, where all or part of the cost of care is compensated by work performed by the child, or Free-Homes, where no payment is made to the foster parent for the cost of care. This last type of home is usually used for long-term care of such children who can never return to their own homes but are not free for adoption.

The two types of foster homes which have served the largest number of children are (1) Individual Foster Homes, and (2) Group Foster Homes. One is a small family setting which the agency is permitted to use for a child or two. Though it offers the child a concentrated experience of parenting and family living, its capacity to provide an enduring roof over a child's head which is so much needed by an already uprooted child, depends entirely upon the willingness of foster parents to continue serving. The group family home represents a setting designed and located by the agency, providing a group life style and staffed by agency employees with the agency control of the total environment, and no child has to leave because an adult has to move.

INDIVIDUAL FOSTER HOMES

As a formalised social system, individual foster family care operates within the framework of the social agency. Three primary participants that team up for the welfare of the child are the agency, the social worker and the foster parents. The agency is responsible for setting standards, policies and goals. The agency's responsibility is expressed through the staff. The criteria common for selection of foster families are: (i) their ability to cope with serious difficulties of childhood without frustration; (ii) identification with and understanding of the young and their problems; (iii) capacity and motivation to learn; (iv) ability to work with a social agency and ability to organise and manage; (v) stability in family relationships between the parents themselves and with their own children, (vi) sufficient income without any financial liabilities, and (vii) neighbourhood, which should be close to schools, clinics and other community services that a child who has suffered from neglect and abuse may need.⁷

The quality of daily life in a foster home is determined by the natural aptitudes of foster parents to provide appropriate care and parenting for the children placed with them. Modification in parental attitudes takes place through experience in fostering and through interchange between families and social workers. Systematic training or education of foster parents has not so far been planned and might not perhaps be feasible, due to the uncertainty of response from foster parents. Continuous supervision and periodical group meetings can be arranged, so can be the distribution of small educative pamphlets in different languages on relevant themes like needs of childhood and deprived children, role of foster parents, role of social worker, etc. to foster parents to upgrade the services given to children in placement. The success of foster placement depends on the selection of foster

families and the relationship between the foster parents and the social worker. Successful foster families can take in more than one child at a time and get enrolled for regular placement of children by the agency. The evolution of foster care is towards greater definition and formalisation of relationships and towards inclusion of foster parents as a part of the agency team.

GROUP FOSTER CARE

Group home care is a clearly discernible recent trend, midway between individual homes and large institutions that provide care for children. Some of the most modern residential facilities for children, started after World Wars I and II, are semi-institutional, reflecting the awareness that children referred for foster care require specialised help that cannot be provided without organising children in manageable units. The Pestalozzi Children's Village, Dr Barnardo's Homes, the S O S Children's Villages and other group homes developed during this period were not necessarily with a therapeutic purpose for severely disturbed children, but for normal children who for some reason or other were deprived of their own home and families.

The Group Home or Family Group Homes have come up in many countries. The London County Council has been a pioneer in creation of family group living—an effort to bring the child into a group where there would be a feeling of security and identification. In the many large housing estates built in counties surrounding London, where entire new communities have been created, a special place in some of these has been given to deprived children—a fact which acknowledges the need to integrate the family home with the wider community. The family group homes were created as units of seven—six houses to accommodate children with their house parents and the seventh for housing the relief staff.

These kinds of group homes have brought

successful integration with the community. The children go to schools on the estate and are at one with other children in the community. Children share the responsibility of running the household, sharing chores with house-parents and running errands as in a normal family. Older children even after finding employment continue to live in the home till they are 18, and can be relied on for help to the younger children.⁸ The value of the family group home concept lies in its flexibility and by its proven capacity for adaptation to the individual needs of particular children. A great deal of responsibility devolves upon the house-parents. It is essential to ensure that adults caring for children are fully trustworthy and have the necessary human qualities to create a warm and secure home life.

Among the many variations of small group homes with cottage as a basic unit, the S O S Children's Village has been the most widely known. Beginning in Austria in 1949 with the drive and vision of its founder, Dr Hermann Gmeiner, the movement has spread across the world. There are now 130 S O S Villages and India is having the largest number—about 17 in different States with over 2,000 children in care. The S O S village provides a 'home' for homeless children and long term care, the child does not have to move out till he is capable of living independently. It replaces the old, impersonal, isolated orphanages and institutions with a warm congenial environment of a family home, with a mother and 7 to 8 other children. It also gives the children a scope for integrated life with the community, for children go to local schools, mothers to market and each cottage has its own kitchen. The S O S also provides an opportunity for rehabilitation to destitute women who find a home and a family that needs their management and affection. Cooking and home care and capacity to give love are essential requirements of this job. Short orientation in child care, nursing, health and nutrition and home economics is given by way of training. This programme has been successful in many countries and has given to

children who were totally rejected and abandoned a chance for a better future. The major criticism against this type of care is the lack of the father-figure in the cottages. The first S O S Children's Village in India started at Faridabad in 1967 as a model. Children's Village has sometimes been commented upon as rather lavish for children who would have to go in the community and live on their own some day.

A variation to the cluster of cottages which forms an S O S Village, an inexpensive experiment without the cost of construction is the family home in a housing complex or a city flat in rented premises like those in the housing complexes of the London City Council. Children live with the house-mother as in any normal household. Variations in working pattern have been evolved in terms of regional differences, availability of staff, etc. These family homes can be supported by local welfare organisations, service organisations, business houses, industries, etc. Twenty-two such family homes have now been set up in Delhi and Maharashtra with local support.

DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIA

The child in need has always been with us, but the earlier societies faced in their own way the problem of providing care and shelter for the orphaned and the destitute, the neglected and the handicapped children. When the destitute child could not be absorbed by the caste or kinship group or the village community, the easiest way was to institutionalise him. A number of our children's homes and orphanages have been in existence for a hundred years or more.

Legislative reforms started since 1850 for delinquent children and culminated in measures like the Madras Children Act 1920, Bengal Children Act of 1922 and the Bombay Children Act of 1938. These are important landmarks in the foster care programme by institutions as well as families.⁹ In Maharashtra, when a court passes an order for committal of a child or a youthful offender to

the care of a relative or other fit person, the latter is liable to maintain such a child or youthful offender and to contribute to his maintenance in a prescribed manner. The Children's Aid Society, Bombay, set up the Delinquency Research Council in its Bureau of Delinquency, Statistics and Research. The latter reported in 1956 on the immense scope for foster home care in India and the need for financial aid to dependent families as a preventive measure as against placing of children under institutional care.¹⁰

A BEGINNING

The Central Children's Act of 1960 is perhaps the first piece of legislation providing for the care, protection, welfare, training, education and rehabilitation of neglected or delinquent children in the Union Territories. It empowers the Children's Board to commit the neglected child to suitable custody. If the Board so thinks fit, instead of making an order under section 15 for sending the child to a Children's Home, it may pass an order placing the child under the care of a parent, guardian or other fit person executing a bond to be responsible for the good behaviour and well-being of the child and for the observance of such conditions as the Board may think fit to impose.¹¹

Accordingly, during the last few years, foster home care has been started by social welfare departments in Delhi, Maharashtra and Punjab under the provisions of the Children's Act, and children placed in selected homes after inquiry into the social and economic status of the family, financial liabilities, health, education and other factors that may influence the child's welfare. Usually, childless couples take children in care free of cost, but if necessary maintenance allowance upto Rs. 30 per month is paid by the department. The first State to take advantage of the provision is Punjab. A full-fledged section in the Department of Social Welfare was started in 1961, and orphans, unclaimed and destitute children were placed in families instead of

institutions after proper screening and matching their social, cultural and religious background with the child's natural family, whenever such families or fit individuals were available.¹² Financial assistance is given upto Rs. 30 per month, medical expenses are reimbursed on production of actual bills.

In Delhi, since 1963, the Delhi Administration has taken up foster family care and adoption programmes for homeless children coming under the Children's Act of 1960. Children preferably below 8 years are given in foster care to persons who meet the requirements of a "fit" person as specified in the Act, and the child can remain with the family upto 18 years. Financial assistance to the family accepting the child for care in the form of maintenance allowance (if the family income is below Rs. 500 per month), and initial expenses and medical expenses are granted.

THE CSWB SCHEME

Children were placed in foster care in individual homes in a scheme started by the Central Social Welfare Board. The Child Care Committee appointed by the Board in 1961 to study the problems of children in need of special care and protection, recommended among other things the institution on an experimental basis of special schemes for growth and development of normal children and of children with problems.¹³ As a follow-up the foster care scheme was started in 1964 for normal children who are rendered homeless temporarily due to such reasons as divorce, desertion, long illness, imprisonment, death of one parent or both parents and who need placement till natural parents, guardians or relatives can resume care.

In Tamil Nadu the Guild of Service, and in Maharashtra the Family Service Centre and the Maharashtra State Women's Council took up the Central Social Welfare Board's foster care scheme. The goal was to return the child to his natural home. Difficulties in recruiting foster families, and disturbance in family life pattern when removing the deprived child to place him

in a foster home, have led to variations and innovations like foster day care and vacation placements. Foster day care is a service for working mothers with pre-school children who are looked after by a neighbouring family on payment of Rs 30 per child per month, while the mother is away at work. Such a service is much needed in cities to keep the mother and child together and avoid regular placement. The services of these voluntary agencies are available to both private and court-committed children. This scheme of the Board has now been merged with the scheme of the Union Ministry of Social Welfare for the foster care of children.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SCHEME

Foster family placement is available, apart from institutional services, under the Government of India scheme for the welfare of children in need of care and protection. The scheme provides for financial assistance to the extent of 90 per cent of the cost to voluntary organisations. Before 1978-79, the foster placement programme was under the Central Social Welfare Board. Now a unit comprises 50 children as against the original strength of 100 children. Voluntary organisations are eligible for assistance at Rs 75 per month per child for 40 children in a unit compared to their eligibility for assistance at Rs 40 per child per month for 30 children. The children covered belong to the age group 12(+) years and belong to the categories of orphaned and abandoned children, children having single parent due to imprisonment, long illness or desertion by either parent and where the income of the family is less than Rs 250 per month, as also normal children whose parents are unable to take care of them due to leprosy or mental illness.

The institutional services under the scheme are intended to provide through voluntary organisations near family atmosphere to children upto 18. Children who are abandoned, neglected, orphaned or homeless, are housed in units of 25 each under the care of a house-mother. Children in the age group

12-18 years are provided, in addition, pre-vocational and vocational training. Building grants to cover 90 per cent of the cost of construction of cottages to accommodate children are also allowed. A number of organisations have opted to maintain smaller units of 8 to 12 children by providing additional cottages and house-mothers from their own funds.

By the end of 1978-79 financial assistance was sanctioned for 32,311 children. In 1979-80, 8,096 children, in 1980-81, 7,215 children and in 1981-82, 6,321 children were covered under the scheme.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

The foster family care programme has functioned in two ways: (i) with the help of voluntary organisations following the scheme introduced in a limited way by the Central Social Welfare Board and later implemented by the Ministry of Social Welfare under its scheme of welfare of children in need of care and protection, and (ii) by the Departments of Social Welfare in some States under the Children's Act.

There is a marked shift in the relative use of foster care services for dependent and neglected children. The trend is away from institutional to foster family care, and yet the programme has not developed so as to reach a larger number of children.

The scope of research in this area is limited by the multiple variations that enter in the placement of a child, because foster care is a complex process, including recruitment of foster parents, matching the children in terms of their social, cultural and religious backgrounds and past experience, followed by supervision and counselling. However, evaluation studies of the programme as administered by voluntary agencies in Bombay¹⁴ and the Delhi Administration have been made and reveal some common problems. These are:

(1) Lack of adequate foster families. Many foster families do not take responsibility for

children from other cultural groups. This inhibits inter-religious placements.

(2) Limitations of foster parents in the basic qualities needed for successful foster placement. It is not provision of food and shelter alone, love, security and understanding, too, have to be provided. Rearing the children of others, especially in Indian society, is not an easy task. The economic factor also starts operating. The child from a poor family is not always accepted as an equal.

(3) The issue of paying remuneration to foster parents is also undecided. There is an opinion that only maintenance costs for the child and medicare should be paid to the foster family and no remuneration, the other opinion considers the foster parent as giving service like a nurse or a teacher needed by society and payment is considered as an incentive for recruiting more foster families.

(4) In cities, accommodation poses a big problem. An extra room is rarely available and in an average Indian family, there are always more members than the space available.

The study on foster care programme in Delhi concludes that it is rather difficult to say whether foster care could be a major child welfare service in the country, and suggests that the programme be implemented as a pilot programme.¹⁵ The social worker has a key role in developing the foster care programme as an organised service. Finding and selecting good foster homes, preparation of the child for change of setting, orienting foster parents with the child's total background, past experience, adjustment between natural parents and foster parents, and the process of reunion and rehabilitation—all these require skilled and trained staff.

A major problem faced by voluntary agencies as well as by departments of social welfare is recruitment and retention of foster parents. In America, where the licensing of foster family homes has long been introduced, the average span of foster parenthood is 2 to 6 years. The most frequent reason given for relinquishing licence is "not interested." The

withdrawal is from the applicant rather than from the agency.¹⁶

Some of the recommendations made by the Seminar held at Delhi in 1977 on Foster Care and Adoption in India, include legislation for facilities for supervision by qualified personnel, recognition of the guardianship of the agency placing the child, a licensing system to provide for maintenance of lists of approved families for placement of children, promotion of foster care through Departments of Social Welfare in all States, setting up family courts in major cities to deal with matters pertaining to families, including foster placement, and financial assistance to foster families not only for maintenance and actual costs but also for accommodation, personal care, etc.

There is need for publicity and public relations to overcome lack of public conviction about the need for foster family care. Good fostering needs community support and understanding of the problems of children to carry the necessary goodwill. Measures have to be taken to establish good relations with foster families which in turn will generate new foster families. In a conventional community, appearance of a stranger child can be a subject of speculation and ill-informed curiosity can be malicious. It is the task of the social worker to keep in touch with the community and create a sense of social worth of the role of foster parents. Such an individual approach is better than mass appeals which are discarded often as propaganda. Besides, foster care initiated by emotional response and enthusiasm to mass appeals tends to wear out when faced with the hard reality of what caring for a child involves.

Legislative measures to provide a uniform legal base covering children placed in foster homes may also help the agencies in increasing the number of foster families on their lists. An amendment in 1978 to the Children's Act, 1960, provides for two qualified workers for Children's Courts. For more vigorous implementation, the requisite machinery should be set up. Along with provision for trained social workers, procedures for licensing of foster families, better budget provisions to

give some incentive to foster families, without making it a lucrative business should be made. As has been done by the London County Council, a unit in every new housing complex should be reserved for foster families, so as to help with the accommodation problem.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

In India, deprivation and destitution of children is mainly due to poverty—genuine financial inability of parents to support the family. Destitute children, whose numbers in India are exceedingly large, are more or less a spill-over from large families with poor parents—children left to fend for themselves because of parental disabilities or parental rejection. To this general poverty, are added natural calamities like floods and famines which accentuate the problem.

It is difficult to imagine provision of foster family care for such large numbers, despite the fact that the government is fully aware of the importance of foster care. Operation of a foster care programme demands a variety of placement resources, each designed to provide the special kind of care needed. Skilled study, diagnosis and treatment, and handling by trained professional staffs determine the success of placement.

The increasing commitment to support the family as the base for meeting child welfare needs has led to innovations like foster day care, family assistance, sponsorship and other programmes which are looked upon as the first line of defence for families threatened with a break-up. An indication of movement away from heavy reliance on foster family care is evident in the increased use in many countries of small group home for children needing such care.¹⁷

Most children resent the fact that they had to come into care, and their devotion to their defaulting parents and homes, no matter how squalid, filthy or inadequate, is a fact to be taken note of. It reveals the recognition in the child of something he needs that a foster family home or a children's home can never give him.

Enlightened child care workers are always conscious of the inadequacies of a substitute home. Hence the need to help parents maintain children in their own homes. Supporting services like casework, better organisation of family life conditions and sponsorships should be strengthened. Innovations should be tried in view of the changing social conditions and the pressures and tensions of modern life and the utter deprivation to which a large number of families are subjected. Foster day care programme to relieve the working mother and home maker in times of crisis like hospitalisation, sudden death, desertion, etc. could help to safeguard, stabilise and unify families. The latter may not be feasible due to the cost involved and the machinery required for its administration. But it could be linked with family assistance programme or slum community centres run by voluntary organisations. A new departure in voluntary service in U.K., where several voluntary organisations are contributing towards maintenance of the quality of family life, is the Family Service Unit. Concerned with the family as a whole, it will not work with parts or problems in isolation. Its way of working with the family rather than for the family, doing things with the family rather than the professional social workers' verbal contact and advice as an outsider, has proved successful.¹⁸ Training programmes, both short-term, and long-term, are necessary to create a cadre of workers that could man these services.

For those children who come into care as orphans and who cannot be adopted, the group family home offers the best solution. Long term placements in foster family homes are hazardous, for it is difficult to provide continuous experience with the same foster parents capable of understanding and meeting the child's changing needs. Foster parents who are excellent for younger children may not be able to cope with the same children when they are adolescents. Too often, children spend their lives in a succession of foster homes without anchor to an element of security.

The latest indictment on foster care system

has come from a three-year study by the Children's Defence Fund that concluded that children removed from their homes and placed in foster care are victims of a massive failure of national policy. Their report entitled "Children Without Homes", released in March 1979, calls for comprehensive reform of public welfare programmes for children, and urges elimination of current financial assistance schemes which help to keep children in out-of-home care, and recommends increased funds for preventive re-unification and adoption services.¹⁹

In the final analysis, the family is as vital to the development of the child as of society. The continuity of standards of behaviour, the transmission of cultural and moral values, and the creation of good social attitudes are all dependent upon processes which take place in the family. To strengthen the family will be an important step in the direction of children's welfare and community's welfare. The ideal is to prevent the child from ever coming into care, not because of cost but because the best place for a child is his own home.

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